





# American



# Morris Newsletter

## From the Editors

Not unlike a shell game, the manner in which the Newsletter has been handed off from editor to editor during the brief periods any of them were around this summer. Capering through western Canada and Cascade glaciers, through the wilds of the Colorado Rockies and through the quiet, green villages of the Cotswolds, its editors wisely left AMN in its cool, dank cellars to mellow and age, to settle and clarify in its cask like good mead. And here is the result: hosts of Directory revisions, an exposition on the fine art of the hobby horse, an introduction to the Open Morris, and yet another pensive peccadillo by our own sage and sot. As always we are grateful for a plentiful supply of team news and the like, and we once again invite those of a more serious turn of mind to own up to their occasional critique and loose the hoard of scholarly gems.

## Faux Pas

The Editors recently received word that the letter from Geoff Rogers which appeared in the last issue of AMN was intended as a personal communication and not for publication. Happily we were able to make amends in person at the recent Midwest Morris Ale, but wish to take this opportunity to do so publicly. In order to avoid future confusion of this sort, please address personal letters by name and mark them "personal".

## Team News

This feature of the American Morris Newsletter is meant to provide for the regular communication among all morris sides as well as those who dance sword, ribbon, and garland. It is dependent upon your letters, postcards, and telephone calls. The names of the correspondents appear at the end of each club's news.

### Bells of the North (Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN)

The Bells of the North have just had the pleasure of celebrating our fourth year in existence--past the teething stage and learning to caper and hookleg without assistance. Mayday much-too-early morning found us once again doing Abrams Circle Dance at dawn on the shore of another beautiful Minneapolis lake--this year it was Lake Nokomis. (And the \$10,000 question is...how long will it take us to dance at all of the lakes in Minnesota? For the answer to this and other exciting questions, tune in 10,000 years from now!) Seriously, words cannot describe the feelings that this dawn tradition evokes.... When this brief solemnity had passed, Mayday proceeded with its usual gaiety and drinking of our revered homemade mead (Huzzah to Jim Linton--our personal brewer and team mascot).

10,000 cheers to the Ann Arbor Morris and Sword for a truly wonderful Midwest Morris Ale. And a special thanks to Rick Nagler of Ann Arbor, who 'gave all of himself' to present the Bells with an award for sending in their registration fees first. It was the high point of the weekend, and in honor of the occasion the Bells have officially installed Rick as an honorary member of our team (green garter and all). This honor was bestowed in recognition of his great courage in allowing himself to be handed over to all sixteen of us, wearing nothing but a loincloth and a red bow. Ah, but we blush to disclose further.

Meanwhile, we have returned to our regular rehearsals on Wednesday evenings--outdoors until fall or mosquito season, whichever comes first. We've been busy dancing at a variety of community festivals almost every weekend, and are currently gearing up for a brewery tour to New Ulm with the Minnesota Traditional Morris on July 16.

Carol Buche, 1366 Raymond, St. Paul, MN 55108

Circleweavers (Denver, CO)

Circleweavers Folk Dance and Music Ensemble was formed in 1979 to present programs in international dance and music. Since then, we have turned our attentions to specializing in dances and music of America and the British Isles. Our repertoire currently consists of suites of Welsh, English and Hebridean dances, Morris, Lancashire clogging, and dances from Appalachia, including clogging. Many of our members sing or play various musical instruments, and we include music and songs in our programs.

While Morris is just a section of our expanding repertoire, it is a growing one and a great favorite. CW began learning Morris in March 1981. Our appetite whetted, we continue to learn new dances and traditions. We currently do a few dances from Adderbury, Ilmington, and Eynsham, with our greatest concentration in Headington and Fieldtown. We have also begun learning Rapper sword.

We have danced Morris at the Colorado Renaissance Festival, the British Faire held in Denver last year, the AFS Diplomatic Ball, the Boulder Folk Festival and many other year-round events in Colorado. We are looking forward to the upcoming All Colorado Morris Ale in August and have been working with the Boulder Maroon Bells, trading dances and practicing Rapper.

We have both a women's and a men's side, and frequently do mixed, depending on the number of available dancers. As with Berkeley Morris, the necessity of dancing mixed at times has given the dances a more energetic flavor while combining the best of our male/female dancing qualities.

We welcome new members of any skill level.

Donna McGinnis, 1640 Humboldt #1, Denver, CO 80218

Green Fiddle Morris (Toronto, Ont.)

It seems as though the idea to start a morris team was sparked for us when Tony Barrand brought the Marlboro Morris and Sword to Toronto for the Mariposa Folk Festival in the summer of 1976. By the following winter Green Fiddle Morris was established, having derived its name from the Fiddlers Green Folk Club. In 1979, both organizations moved to the TRANZAC (Toronto Australia-New Zealand Club), their present headquarters. Practices are now held every Monday night.

The team has always been mixed, although generally speaking, men and women dance separately at dance-outs. Originally there were two squires, one male and one female, but this

proved to be unsatisfactory, and now only one is elected to cover both men and women. Green Fiddle has danced several different traditions in its history. We began with Bampton, Adderbury, and Longborough. This season we will be dancing Bampton, Fieldtown, and Sherbourne mixed, with Bledington as our men's tradition and Ducklington as our women's tradition.

Hope you had fun at the Midwest Ale! We wish we hadn't been tied up.

Doug Creighton, 86 Follis Avenue, Toronto, Ont. M6G 1S6

Madcap Morris (Seattle, WA)

The Gasworks Morris team (listed in the directory) no longer exists. Seattle now has three teams: Mossyback Morris Men, Misty City Morris, and Madcap Morris.

Over the July 4th weekend, the Victoria morris teams are dancing at their festival and have invited the three Seattle teams to join them in Victoria B.C., along with the Vancouver Morris Men. The Mossyback Morris Men were privileged to dance for the Queen at her recent visit.

We (Madcap Morris) have been together for a year and a half, and dance Adderbury, Headington, and Bampton to the music of a tin whistle played by Chris Roe.

Patricia Tanin, 2720 N.E. 92nd, Seattle, WA 98115

Maroon Belis Morris (Boulder, CO)

We will be touring in Boulder with Swords over Sopris (Carbondale, CO) on July 9, as they're coming here to dance at the opening ceremonies for the Colorado Shakespeare Festival on July 8 & 9. We'll be doing similar frivolities for the opening nights of the second and third plays of the summer on July 15 and 22. Ron Geering has asked us to dance with Swords over Sopris at the Carbondale Mountain Fair July 29-31. We're hoping to have enough people to do that. Similarly we've received an invitation to the Long's Peak Festival in Estes Park on September 10 and 11 at the old Stanley Hotel. Rocky Mountain Morris is rumored to be participating there as well. Anyone who's in the area for these weekends should feel free to join us. I think we've plenty of floor space and/or tent space for anyone who wishes.

We've also come across a costuming question that someone among the readership might be able to answer. Our current kit is the traditional whites with ribbons, bells, and vests. We're working on baldricks. The Shakespeare Festival is willing and enthusiastic about letting us use any appropriate items in their costume closet for our dancing with them. They're suggesting doublets and tights. We aren't sure that morris dancers in Shakespeare's time would have been wearing doublets and tights, but don't have any better suggestions. We think the current kits are based on dress from around 1900, but we don't even know where that idea came from. So the question is, what did morris dancers wear in Shakespeare's time? I'd like to hear from anyone who has any information on the subject.

Sallie Sprague, 145 So. 30th Street, Boulder, CO 80303

Merrie Mac Morris (Concord, NH)

We dance monthly with the Nonesuch Morris team of Durham in Epsom, NH. We started in September, 1980 with the assistance of Dudley Laufman of Canterbury and a handful of rank beginners. We dance primarily Adderbury, Headington, and a bit of Fieldtown, Bledington, and Bampton. We are quickly developing traditional dance out dates for: late April--New England Folk Festival; Mayday with the Nonesuch Morris Team, usually in the seacoast area of NH;

mid-May--a full-blown English May festival at the Mill Pond Center in Durham, complete with Maypole, May Queen and King, as guests of the Nonesuch Morris; late July--Canterbury Fair; mid-August--Epsom Old Home Day. This year we are also planning to join the Twin State Morris and Fruit Team of Norwich VT for the Muskeag Music Festival (and morris tour) on June 4, the ale for mixed teams on May 31 in Falmouth, MA, and the New Hampshire Folk Festival, recently revived, on August 14 in Concord. One of our most enjoyable tours was last November of some nursing homes in the Manchester area and a downtown shopping mall with a pub that let us dance for a round of beers.

Nancy Winneg, retiring squire, Box 206, RFD #4, Hooksett, NH 03106

Minnesota Traditional Morris (Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN)

MTM has once again thrust the mantles of leadership upon the necks of those either too deserving or too timid to resist. Squire Larry Klueh danced himself back into office for a return engagement, and bagman Peter Mellom was reelected. Rick Mohr was tapped as Ragman. Honorific titles were granted to Kirk Bachler ("Hephaestus") for his epic efforts to keep us in sticks, Gary Schulte for his long service as musician, and Tim Dennis for his talent as a horse hobbyist. Decisions were also taken to reduce the performance repertoire to a maximum of four traditions. One of these is likely to be Longborough which Jim Brickwedde will be bringing from across the seas in August, having spent a year with the Hammersmith Morris Men.

The team has undertaken a good deal more local touring this year with events in Stillwater, MN on the St. Croix River, two festival events on the Iron Range in Virginia and Chisholm and a visit to the August Schell Co. brewery and other local attractions in New Ulm, MN. Two members had the opportunity to tour with the Mossyback Morris Men and the Vancouver Morris Men at the Vancouver Folk Festival and a third visited the new teams in Colorado. We look forward to the Renaissance Festival which will include tour visits by the Windy City Women of Chicago, Prarie Waves Morris of Omaha and Oak Apple from Madison, WI as well as our local favorites, the Bells of the North.

We should also note that we have taken on two members who moved to the Twin Cities from other teams in Chicago and Portland. Let us reiterate our policy of doing whatever we can to board and entertain visiting morris folks and to invite those moving to the Twin Cities to look us up.

Steve Parker, 438 N.E. 4th St., Mpls., MN 55413

Mossyback Morris Men (Seattle, WA)

Yes, Dorothy, the "Emerald City" has its own morris side. Under the capable (or is it capricious?) leadership of our own Wizard of Odds, Squire Bob Greco, himself an outcast from the Binghamton Morris Men, the MBMM, now in their third year, can dance with a lot of heart, some courage and . . . uh, (we're not sure about brains. We now have 16 members performing Bledington and Ducklington dances, with Ann Arbor's Ken Smith, the latest morris renegade to come tumbling down onto this side of the rainbow. We've become accustomed to having folks drop in on us from other parts, and not just from Kansas. In the past year Laurie Andres, of the Foggy Bottom Morris, John Fliss and Julia Bouland, also from the other Washington, and Greg Anderson from the Lexington Morris Men have toured with us. (Two Minnesota dancers also paid a visit while John's letter was in transit.--Eds.)

This year has already been a very active one for the MBMM. In March we performed for Queen Elizabeth II at Seattle Center on behalf of the City of Seattle, although the City did forget to tell the Secret Service about us. We were joined by several other Northwest sides--the Vancouver Morris Men, the Misty City Morris (a new women's team in Seattle), and the Portland Morris on May Day for much frolicking and revelry on Bainbridge Island. The day began with a sunrise dance in the middle of Puget Sound aboard the Seattle/Winslow ferry. We have performed or will be performing at a number of folklife festivals and other fairs in both Seattle and Vancouver, B.C. The MBMM and VMM have more than doubled the number of joint tours from last year, spurring threats for border closures to all morris dancers and seizure of bellpads, sticks and handkerchieves by both U.S. and Canadian customs officials. We also have our frequent street and pub tours, such as our St. George's Day tour for Lars Watson, whom we transported to Brisbane, Australia for a year for beginning his rounds in a counterclockwise direction.

We expect to be doing something almost every week through September, and less frequently during the winter. We encourage anyone who is planning to pass through these parts to call either 206/527-8953 or 206/725-7600.

John Mauk, Bagman, P. O. Box 85185, Seattle, WA 98105  
 Bob Greco, Squire, 5131 S. Mead St., Seattle, WA 98118

#### Wake Robin Women's Morris (Amherst, MA)

We are a women's team, dancing Fieldtown and the occasional, recently-learned Bampton. We dance in and around Amherst and the Valley, and enjoy local tours the most, although we did have a good time at the Ann Arbor Midwest Morris Ale.

The team began in September '81, with several who were primarily interested in dancing, and against tradition, kits, and tours. An invitation to dance at Mayday in 1982 provided motivation to kit and dance out. Since then, we have been hard at work polishing style, clarifying points of confusion, and urging new musicians to play. We have a library of information going, and plans for several weekends. Rehearsals 7:30 -9:30 Mondays at Bangs Community Center in Amherst. Call in case we're outside somewhere.

Karen Blom, 105 Hemenway Rd., North Leverett, MA 01054

#### OPEN MORRIS

By James C. Brickwedde

(Editors' Note: This article is the third in a series on the different morris organizations representing sides in the United Kingdom. The first dealt with the Morris Ring (January '83, Vol. 6, no. 4), and the second with the Women's Morris Federation (April '83, Vol. 7, no. 1).)

Open Morris is the youngest of the three organizational structures representing morris sides here in the UK. Started in 1979, largely through the efforts of Fenstanton Morris from Cambridgeshire, it has become the meeting ground for morris sides of all persuasions--mixed, male and female. Much of the original impetus to form Open Morris came through the need of a lone mixed side looking for friendly neighbors. The result is an interesting attitude towards the dance. Open Morris, in the UK, comes closest to sharing a philosophy towards morris dancing with most American and Canadian sides. That philosophy supports these ideals:

- a) morris is a living tradition subject to societal changes;

- b) morris has never been, based on historical evidence, truly an exclusive male prerogative;
- c) it is more important to dance the dance and to do it well than to worry about the sex of those who dance it.

Open Morris currently represents 40 sides: 17 mixed, 17 female, and 6 male sides. The membership is comprised of a thorough mixture of Cotswold, Northwest, Border, Clog and Sword dance sides, with a few sides performing garland and country dancing in their repertoire as well. Almost all the current member sides of OM have formed since 1977, making it a very young collection of sides indeed.

Mixed sides, in general, are quite a new phenomenon here. Outside of the few historical references before 1890 to women dancing in a set to help fill out a side on occasion, the first fully established mixed sides do not seem to have appeared before 1975. Many men's sides in the UK can barely tolerate the idea of a set of women dancing, never mind a coed set! Therefore, mixed sides have had to work harder to gain recognition and acceptance.

There is rarely a problem in the UK of finding enough dancers of one sex to form a side. In America, as is well recognized, to find six people of any sexual preference to dance morris at all is sometimes a great effort; therefore the reason for so many mixed sides. But in the UK, the formation of mixed sides seems a more deliberate action, based as much on social and political attitudes towards equal rights as for the sheer pleasure of dancing the dances. To the credit of mixed sides I've seen perform, I have been much impressed with the vigor and vitality given to the dance equally by both its female and male dancers. I wish I could say the same for many of the more established men's and women's sides I have seen at Ring or WMF events--but that is next issue's article.

OM was, therefore, established for those sides who chose not to battle over who is or is not the holder of tradition. Instead, it emphasizes the enjoyment and the betterment of the dance. Other services the organization provides are instructionals in specific dance traditions as well as in playing music for the morris, a weekend of dance (this year's will be on August 5-7 in St. Albans), third party liability insurance, and a quarterly newsletter. Efforts to provide more explanatory dance notation have been made with a more narrative description of the Fieldtown tradition. One major shortcoming of this effort, and with the WMF's publications of a similar nature, is the lack of printed music to accompany the dance descriptions, rendering the publication as functional as most ballad collections--nice words but no means to sing them by!

I have been to two major Open Morris events. The first was a Fieldtown instructional held on March 5 of this year in Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. The teaching was provided by Roy Dommett with music by Alan Whear (Windsor). Both are remarkable people in teaching the morris. The dancing was almost non-stop (except for lunch) for six hours. Well worth the 4.50 fare for the day. (I wasn't able, unfortunately, to attend the Northwest Clog instructional held in April in West Yorkshire. A musicians' instructional, to be led by Alan Whear, is being planned for this coming autumn in London.) The second event was the recent Fenstanton Day of Dance (June 25-26) held in the villages of Godmanchester, Huntingdon, and Herringfords Abbott. Six sides participated, including two Northwest Morris sides (one mixed, one female). One subtle touch of class to the weekend was the use of two very large steam powered tractors, belching smoke and soot, which led and tailed the procession of dancers as they moved from site to site. One tractor towed a wagon upon which all the dancers and musicians piled their paraphernalia--a most practical solution to an ever-present problem while dancing on tour.

Open Morris and the Women's Morris Federation recently held a summit meeting in order to discuss common ground. As reported in my article on that organization, WMF have revised all their membership rules largely in response to the creation of Open Morris. Although chances of a merger between the two organizations are slight, due to differences in their styles of operation, each group recognizes and supports the efforts of the other--much common ground exists.

At the summit, it was agreed to combine efforts concerning the notation of dances and collection of music, and to cooperate on archival research projects. This is an important development, as it will only make for a stronger voice in advocating morris to the public. Many OM sides are also WMF members as well, but like the two British political parties, the Liberals and the SDP, they will remain separate but equal partners in an alliance.

One major difference between OM and WMF, and in fact between OM and the Morris Ring, is OM's statement of purpose, a portion of which states the objective of upholding a high standard of dance. It is the use of the two words "uphold" and "standard" in the same sentence which scared some notable WMF sides from joining OM. In practice, OM is interested in encouraging the development of good dancing and good presentation, but the concept of upholding a standard requires a uniform enforcement policy. It is a dangerous concept to hold and is much against the concept of morris as a living tradition, which was the prime motivation which gave birth to OM. Member sides could do well by themselves in clarifying this volatile use of language.

As with any new organization, Open Morris has its growing pains, especially as it seeks to clarify parliamentary procedure. OM has advertised itself as being governed with a minimum of rules and regulations. However, to read recent accounts and reactions to OM's business meetings, the fear of creeping bureaucracy has been raised. This adjustment from being a friendly meeting ground to a national organization may be inevitable to some extent. How ordered the governance procedures become in the future, only time will tell.

Many Americans would feel at home with the sides I've met through Open Morris. The philosophical approach to the dance is similar and there is less an air of self-importance about them and more a feeling of raw energetic friendliness.

To contact Open Morris about team or individual membership, future events, etc., write to Richard Gregson, Publicity Officer, 27 St. Anns Lane, Godmanchester, Huntingdon, Cambs.

With Arthur Knowles



In an earlier column I brought up the problems of dancers shifting from team to team, responding to economic incentives in the manner of other major sports players. This is a change in the nature of the morris which we can learn to accept, so long as it is regulated. I did not bring up a much more dangerous development: the pirating of morris dancers through romantic attachment. I had hoped that Frank Hall's lightning raid on Minneapolis last year would be a singular occurrence. Unfortunately that has not been the case. It has now come to light that the memorable and much enjoyed American tour of the Bampton Traditional Morris was in fact a thinly disguised reconnaissance in force in the growing battle for quality dancers. At least two

weddings have resulted, or will soon result from that notable foray, with concomitant loss of dancers to American sides. If this trend continues, it will wreak havoc with the fine balance between the British and American morris leagues. And until we can think of some other way to deal with the problem, we are sincerely hoping that some of the British women's teams will visit our shores so that we have a chance to get even.



II. The recent decision handed down by the Supreme Court of the United States on sex discrimination in the payment of pension annuities has been noted with great alarm by some morris dancers. This landmark decision could, indeed, have far-reaching effects throughout the morris community. Disregarding the much argued merits of the current situation, it cannot be argued that morris dancing is one of the few surviving institutions which discriminates entirely and solely on the basis of sex. Each independent morris side defines itself as "men's", "women's" or "mixed". Now, to my knowledge, there are no federal civil actions pending which would call into question our right to define ourselves and, in effect, discriminate on the basis of sex. Given the present levels of funding for morris dancing, it is unlikely that we shall have to face this difficulty in the near future. However the Supreme Court's latest decision might well be applicable to morris dancing in specific cases.

Suppose a typical mixed side, after dancing out and busking the crowd for a fair return, settles into the local pub around a large table well stocked with pitchers of their favorite brew. It has been statistically proven that women (with a few notable exceptions) drink less than men. Are the women therefore being shorted their fair share of the return on the group bag? Or does the fact (again statistically proven) that the women tend to stay sober longer than the men mean that they get more than their fair share of enjoyment out of the occasion? This is not necessarily a new problem. Those of us who are renowned (or notorious) for drinking quickly have always suffered from the abuse and complaints of the "sippers", especially when the quantity of beer is limited. For the present, arguments of this nature are easily solved on the local level, with or without gloves, but woebetide us all should the Federal government decide to intervene in the morris.

### Horseplay Is More Than Just "Horsing Around!"

By Scott Bartell

Most of us played with "hobby horses" as children, if only by straddling a broom and pretending to chase the rustlers across the prairie, six-guns blazing. Or perhaps you chose the more direct route of actually pretending to be the horse, tying a dish towel behind you and stamping and snorting while someone offered you a handful of grass. Remember how powerful and free you felt? You were participating in an ancient and honorable tradition that goes right alongside the morris dance: the horse plays.

Most readers of this newsletter undoubtedly have encountered the horse as a figure of fun and mischievous interference, weaving in and out of your figures and generally causing a charming mess. In the two rituals described here, the horse is the central figure and everyone else an accessory; though humor is still present, deeper currents of power run through the drama.

The two I have seen and participated in are the "Padstow 'Oss" and the "Mari Llewyd"; the first comes from the Cornish village of Padstow and the other from the mining areas of Wales and both go back into the uncharted reaches of antiquity. (My attempts to write about them here are meant only as an experiential introduction by someone who has enjoyed them, not as a scholarly analysis. If any reader can correct or expand on my lovingly supplied misinformation, please do!)

Several elements appear to have been brought together in this one: the death and rebirth cycle by Punch and Judy and the Doctor, and the general fertility magic by the horse. It seems a contradiction for the horse to nip the women and instill fertility when it, too, is female; this may have crossed over from an old Irish ritual in which the king at his elevation went through a ceremony of ritual or actual copulation with a white mare which embodied the magic spirit of the whole tribe. Without this mating, the king was not properly invested with the magic energy. In some version, the mare was then sacrificed and the meat cooked in a huge cauldron; the king had to bathe in the broth and then all the tribe partook. That may reflect glimmers of the oldest use of the horse: as a hunted source of food. The white mare shows up in other old mythic contexts too. The capitol of one Northern Irish dynasty was at Emain Macha, named after a goddess who turned into a white horse. The Angles and Saxons carried white horse tail banners and two of their legendary leaders who invaded Celtic Britain were Hengest and Horsa--both words for horse. I don't know if "Mari Llewyl" is still done in Wales.

The "Padstow 'Oss" definitely is still done in Padstow. There is an excellent film of it being performed as a continued living May Day tradition a few years ago.

This is a much simpler ritual and, as I experienced it, a much more powerful one. In Padstow, several teams start from different ends of the town at day-break and go all day, pausing only to eat and drink as they process. Each team has musicians, but the only real characters I recall are the 'Oss and his Teaser.

This horse is pretty clearly a stallion, acting the same way as the horse in the "Mari Llewyl" but catching young women under its costume drapes and marking them with soot or pitch before they are released, now bearing good luck. The

Several years ago I was attending a musical and cultural camp-out in northern California called the Bardic Weekend. This annual event was organized by the Institute for Celtic Studies, a Bay Area group of which I was a member and officer. Along with classes in playing pennywhistle and harp, Gaelic and Welsh language lessons, history and mythology lectures and a lot of traditional feasting (roasted salmon in butter and honey) and drinking (Guinness and claret, mead and metheglin) we did large dances and rituals, such as the morris (led by Terry O'Neal), the mummers' plays, the wren boys and--new to me--the horse plays.

The "Mari Llewyl" (Welsh for "white mare") is a play done by the miners each year at Easter in a procession from house to house within their village, presenting the ritual for the general good luck of the household in return for cakes, ale, money and so forth. A Foreman (in top hat with ribbons) sings the whole way through the proceedings, invoking the Fair Folk to see the play and naming each of the other characters as they perform their parts. (Unfortunately I must operate from memory here.) There are a sergeant and a corporal who make music on instruments, Punch and Judy who fight and make up, a Doctor who brings Punch back after he is knocked out by a blow from Judy, and the Horse. This horse is a pole with a head, which in times past used to be a real horse skull, with a clapper jaw worked by the player who carries the whole contraption elevated with a white sheet covering him. He dances and capers with the other characters but periodically runs wild and lunges after women in the audience. They are supposed to pretend to be frightened and run but also are supposed to be caught and nipped by the horse--this brings them "good luck" for the coming year, which meant more specifically, I am told, pregnancy. The dance was taught and led by the late Greg Poole, a fine singer and promoter of Welsh customs in the Institute; he had many verses for the song which in this instance he had set to a very singable Irish air we all knew. The play was short and not too demanding; the total effect was light and whimsical and both performers enjoyed it greatly.

costume is quite cumbersome; it consists of a huge, heavy iron hoop about five feet in diameter suspended by straps from the shoulders of the player. The hoop is filled in with black cloth with red geometric patterns and long black skirts sweep down to the ground. The player's head is covered by a tall, pointed black hat with a red demonic face painted on the front, very grim and much larger than the player's own face. A very small horse head is mounted on the front of the hoop and a tail on the rear. The player must leap and caper and sweep the hoop about with great vigor as he processes, run into the crowd and lift the hoop to ensnare a victim with care and agility, smudge and release her and not knock anyone unconscious with the hoop. This goes on and on while the player is hidden inside the heavy, sweltering outfit. (I know this because I danced it.)

He is led by the Teaser, a Fool who dances before him carrying a wand with a little heart-shaped silk cushion, from which dangles a fringe of ribbons. This is held before the horse's nose and seems to be the only thing that can attract his attention besides the women in the crowd. When looked at with a squint, the teasing-stick is a pretty clear symbol of female genitalia.

As they move forward, the players sing a song whose chorus is "Unite and unite and let us all unite/ For summer is y-come today/ And whither we are going, we will all unite/ On this merry morning of May." The effect is very jolly and lusty and the spectators follow along, mimicking the troupe; when the 'Oss catches someone, male spectators grab women and mime intercourse from behind with them (shown in the film and attested to) in spite of great diversity of age and station.

Luckily for the poor 'Oss dancer, he gets to "die" at intervals, sinking to the ground while the others sing some slow, complex, obscure verses with a lot of historical referents in them. Finally he is revived and brought to his feet by a maiden with a cup of drink who first puts the horse-head muzzle into it, then brings it to the player's lips. With that, the music picks up again and the troupe is on their way. At the sunset, the team goes to the edge of a body of water where the horse stoops to drink and the ritual is over.

The total effect of this dance is heavier and more insistent. While it is still quite sexual (and some of the women remain hidden under the horse drapes for a long time) and most everyone seems to enjoy it, it is very hard work and people sometimes get into a trance-like state with all of the repetition and effort. There is also a somewhat sinister tome with the huge black horse and the demon mask. This latter is apparently descended from an African witch doctor's mask brought back in the late 1700's by a sailor, and many women at our gathering found themselves frightened, repulsed or unwilling to get too close. On the other hand, many reported strong sexual feelings around it after a number of repetitions.

I had assumed at the time I saw these (and danced the horse in both) that they were probably well known to most morris and ritual dancers, but I have since found that not to be the case. I have lost my written materials and would love to hear from any who have more knowledge of these dances. (For that matter, at the Minneapolis May Day Parade and picnic, a group of pagans sang the whole Padstow song but had no knowledge of the dance.) Nevertheless, these dances live for me in a meaningful way.

(Editors' note: Scott Bartell is a piper, harper, singer, pagan, therapist and friend of the morris in Minnesota. He resides in St. Paul and writes occasionally for several local papers.)

We were amazed and pleased to receive a great number of corrections and additions to the 1983 directory. Listed below are new teams (new to us, at least), new contact persons, address corrections, and additional parenthetical information on team membership (M=men's, W=women's, Mx=mixed, and K=kids), rehearsal day (M,T,W,Th,F,Sa,Su), and year founded. It's up to individual teams to let us know of further errors or changes--we hope there aren't too many.

### British Columbia

Vancouver Morris Men. Graham Baldwin, Squire, 2380 Hyannis Dr., North Vancouver B.C., V7H 2E6 (M;?:82)

### California

Berkeley Morris. (Mx;T;77)

Long Beach Morris. (new listing) Gene Lerner, 336 Argonne Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90814 (?:?:?)

### Colorado

Circle Weavers. See team news. (W,M;?:79)

### Connecticut

Mianus River Morris. (Mx;?:76)

Mystic Garland. (W;?:81)

New Haven Morris and Sword. (Mx;?:77)

### District of Columbia

Rock Creek Morris. (new contact) Marte Clark, 2901 Connecticut Avenue NW, B3, Washington, D.C. 20008 (W;T;79)

### Illinois

Windy City Women. (new address) Leslie Roberts, 659 W. Cornelia, Apt. 1W, Chicago, IL 60657

### Maine

Fiddler's Reach Morris. (Mx;W;75)

Fiddlesticks Morris Men. (new listing) Alan Furth, RFD 1, Box 162, Lubec, ME 04652 (M;?:81)

Highland Mary. Apologies to Sarah McBrian for getting her name wrong. Address is Box 135, Hope, ME 04847 (W;?:78)

Lord Hill Morris Men. (complete address) John Gawler, Buttermilk Hill, Belgrade Lakes, ME 04918

Marsh Island Morris. Kathy Carter's ZIP is 04469

Starling Morris. Contact is Liana Eastman, RFD 1, Fayette, ME 04349 (Mx;?:78)

Twin Spruce Morris Women. Deborah Furth's address: RFD 1, Box 162, Lubec, ME 04652 (W;?:81)

### Maryland

Huntingdon Sword of Baltimore. (M;T;82)

Massachusetts

Banbury Cross Morris and Sword. (new listing) Beth Anderson, 9 Jenness Road, Brookline, MA  
02146 (K;Th;81)  
Berkshire Morris. (new listing) Chris Belski, Box 18, Sheffield, MA 02157 (M;?:S2)  
Black Jokers. (M;Th;?)  
Ha'Penny Morris. (W;M;78)  
Millers River Morris. Contact is Bill Sullivan, Neale Road, Royalston, MA 01331 (M;?:81)  
Muddy River Morris. (W;T;?)  
Pinewoods Morris Men. (M;Su;66)  
Wake Robin Women's Morris. (new listing) Karen Blom, 105 Hemenway Road, North Leverett, MA  
01054 (W;M;81)

Missouri

(Kansas City,MO) (new listing, but we don't have the name) Betty Tillotson, 7617 Madison,  
Kansas City, MO 64114 (?:;?)

New Hampshire

Canterbury Morris. (new listing) Dudley Laufman, Canterbury, NH 03224 (Mx,K;?:75)  
Harrisville Morris. (W;M;78)  
Jack O' the Green Morris Men. (new listing) Bill Thomas, RFD 3, Sawmill Road, Hillsboro, NH  
03244 (M;?:82)  
Merrie Mac Morris. (Mx;Su;80)  
Nonesuch Morris. (Mx;?:80)  
Twin State Morris and Fruit. (new listing) Blake Meike, P.O. Box A-192, Hanover, NH 03755  
(Mx;W;82)

New York

Binghamton Morris Men. (M;T;73)  
Bouwerie Boys. (M;M;80)  
Greenwich Morris Men. (new contact) Steve Corrsin, 423 W. 120th Street, Apt. 97, New York, NY  
10027  
Lake Effect Morris. Elaine Larsen, 12 Genesee St., Scottsville, NY 14546 (?:;?)

New Jersey

Millstone River Morris. (Foreperson: Andrea Osgood, Squire: Martin Hariss)  
James Van Fleet, 116 Livingston Av. Apt.1B, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 (?:;?:83)

Ontario

Green Fiddle Morris. (correct address) Doug Creighton, c/o TRANZAC, 292 Brunswick Avenue,  
Toronto, ONT M55 2M7  
Malt Mill Morris. Contact is John Gillett, 1126 Nashua Avenue, London, ONT N6K 2C3

Pennsylvania

Iron City Morris. (new listing) Nancy Prentice, 306 E. Leasure Avenue, New Castle, PA 16101

Vermont

The Midnight Capers. (new listing) Larry Becker, 28-1/2 First Avenue, Montpelier, VT 05602  
(Mx;?;81)

Washington

Madcap Morris. (new listing) Patricia Tanin, 2720 NE 92nd, Seattle, WA 98115 (?;M;82)

Misty City Morris, (new listing) Liz Dreisbach, no address available, Seattle, WA. Phone is  
783-7639 (W;W;82)

Mossyback Morris Men. (new listing) Tim Lane, 2713 NE 94th, Seattle, WA 98115. (M;W;81)

The following teams are defunct:

Gasworks Morris (Seattle, WA)  
Wetland Stompers (West Acton, MA)  
Stillwater Morris Men (Orono, ME)  
Moose Mountain Morris (Norwich, VT)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The first all-Colorado Morris Ale will be held in Boulder on August 26-28. Teams attending will include Maroon Bells (Boulder), Rocky Mountain Morris and Sword (Ft. Collins), Circle Weavers (Denver), and Swords over Sopris (Carbondale). Anyone traveling in the area is welcome to attend. Contact Sallie Sprague, 145 So. 30th St., Boulder CO 80302.



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1936 ROBLYN  
ST. PAUL, MN 55104  
612-646-5649

LET US KNOW HOW MANY OF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ATTEND AND WHAT DANCES OR  
PLAYS YOU DO. PLEASE RESPOND AS SOON AS POSSIBLE SO THAT  
THE APPROPRIATE ARRANGEMENTS CAN BE MADE.

SPONSORED BY THE MINNESOTA TRADITIONAL MORRIS AND THE RITUAL DRAMA TEAM

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# **The American Morris Newsletter**

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438 N.E. 4th St.  
Minneapolis, MN 55413

**a publication devoted solely to  
English Morris & Sword Dancing**

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