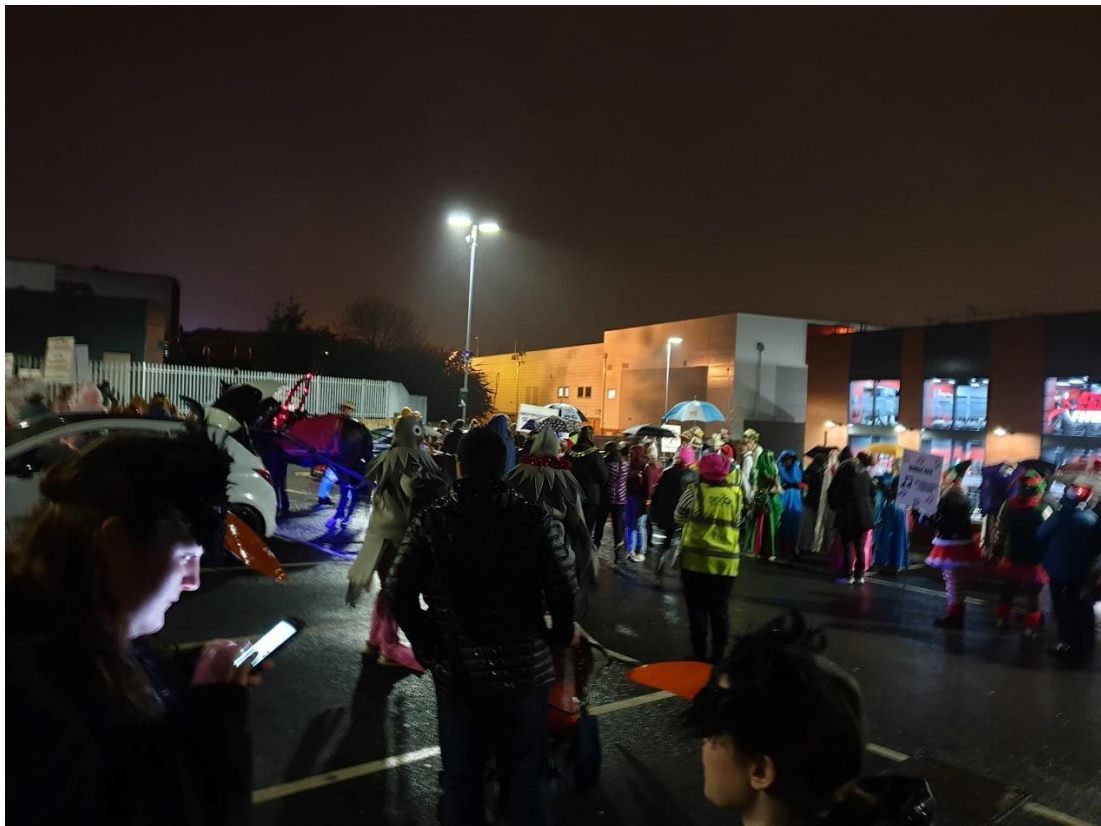


2019 -2020 SEASON
"THE PLAGUE YEAR"

Ten Lords A' Leaping



Despite the drizzle this turned out to be an unexpectedly jolly evening (kicked off by refreshments at Matt's) and we did manage to get ten men to turn out.

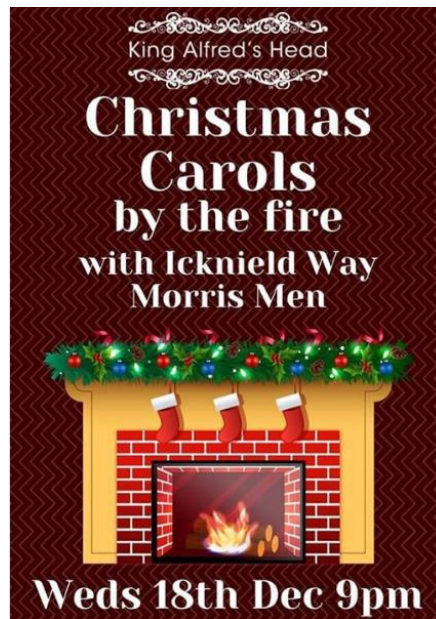


Waiting for the off – ten men under just the one brolly



IWMM not the only people in silly dress (and on stilts)





A good evening as there was non-folky support from the town yoof.

The able Pete collected a shedload of money for charity



Wantage Mummers

Boxing Day 2020



As usual – Faringdon, Wantage and Childrey.

We attracted a town crier as well as the mayor this year





Not a good start – we had to get changed under the market house. Despite Jack having twice arranged with The Crown we were thrown out by a grumpy manager.

However, Faringdon hospitality rescued by the Faringdon Coffee House which provided après performance coffee and cakes



Nice helmet – which unfortunately restricted Alf's vision

Medicinal magic from Jack Vinney



A few words from
Old Father
Beelzebub



A dance to finish and then into the pop-up-pub





A mistake with the sound effects led to a hole being blown in Santa's jacket. This has been appropriately repaired.



Before Xmas two of the team were interviewed by a folk-related journalist. The result was an excellent four-page article (with some additions from Yateley Mummings) in The Fortean Times.

Collection



We collected £1755 which with top-ups from book sales and Icknield Way MM resulted in £2000 being given to Homeless Oxfordshire

TWIGS Wassail

11 January 2020



The Butler addresses the crowd before the Men drive away the evil spirits





The tree is blessed and toasted then everyone returns to the hut for entertainment



THE sound of Morris dancing and merrymaking filled the air as a noisy procession of people went wassailing through community gardens.

Pots and pans clattered and clanked as the long line made its way around Twigs in Cheney Manor to the gardens' apple tree where the traditional festivities would begin.

The wassail king and queen walked arm in arm around the tree three times while a large and enthusiastic crowd made as much noise as possible to scare away evil winter spirits.

A toast from the wassail king prompted a cheery response before he poured cider around the tree's roots to encourage it to produce more apples in the year to come.



After the toast, children decorated the tree with actual toast cut into the shapes of wildlife then danced to two songs from the Morris men.

Six-year-old Rhea Baxter got to hang a butterfly-shaped slice onto the tree and had a great time. She said: "It was so fun, I liked the dancing and want to come back next year."

Her grandmother Suzanne said: "It's a lovely family-oriented event that the children can enjoy. There's a deeper meaning to it but it's also really fun and interactive.

"I've been coming here for a few years but this is Rhea's first time. I've never seen it so busy - there were twice as many people compared to last year, which is fabulous

"It's good to see that people care about these traditions and want to get connected to the Earth, especially with all the climate issues we face.

"I want to start wassailing my trees now, too."

Finally, the wassail king presented three symbolic items for the queen's basket - a candle representing light, a yew branch representing long life, and a nut representing fruitfulness.

Twigs trustee Dick Millard stepped into the role of wassail butler and king for the day. One of the songs performed during the ceremony came from his home county.

He said: "It gives me an opportunity to dress up and it feels like I'm harking back to my roots in Gloucestershire. People really enjoy wassailing here, which is lovely.



"There's so much to enjoy - I like presenting the candle because of its symbolic light, I like singing because I'm part of two choirs, and I enjoy seeing the contrast of colours that the Morris dancers bring to the gardens."

After the festivities ended, the Morris dancers continued performing while guests enjoyed snacks and drinks.

Helen Basu visited with her children and neighbours. She said: "It's a nice reminder that spring is coming, and the kids loved it. This tradition shows how wise previous generations were about the world and our need to connect with nature."

Morris Quiz Night
The Bell – 21 January 2019



The Squire put a lot of effort into this, the first Morris Quiz Night, and it was a well-deserved success. Silly charades were given equal weight to really difficult morris history questions so the playing field was levelled out a bit.

The winning team was Pete Amb, Pete Mac, Steve D and Jim and a special prize for having an inexhaustible list of “morris” film titles went to Lepton.



First Prize

Graham's 40th Birthday

1 March 2020



The side plus some country members turned out for Graham's secret 40th at The Fox.

Kyan did his first dance in public accompanied by Uncle David.



The 14 Club

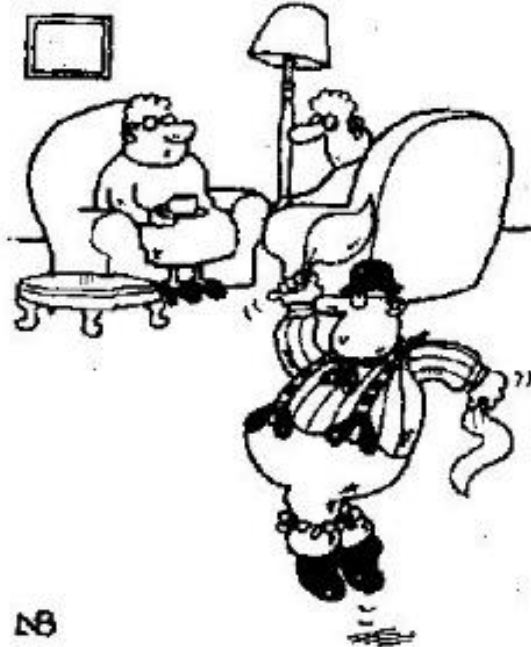
9 March 2020



As usual an enjoyable time performing at Fitzwarren School followed by spending its donation in The Lamb

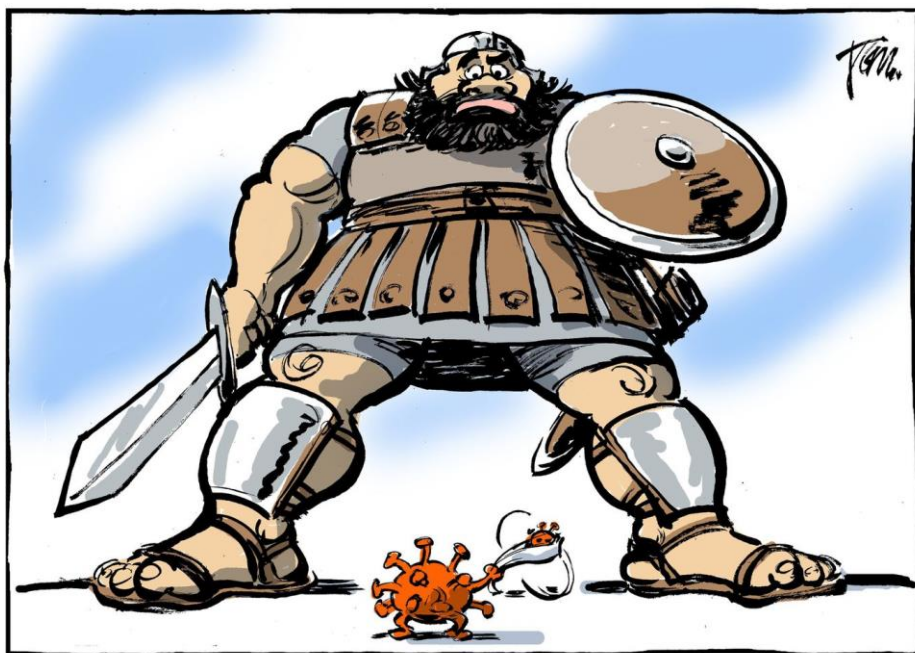


THE GREAT PLAGUE SHUTDOWN



“I’ll be glad when coronavirus
is over and Sid can get out more.”

Coronaovirus pandemic was not a joke but IW tried to keep its spirits up even though we stopped practice in the middle of March and gigs were cancelled.



Zoom Time

Practice and pubs were replaced by Wednesday evening internet chat – at least it meant we would remember each other's names. Our first session was largely shouting at each newcomer to click on the appropriate buttons but even the oldies eventually got the hang of it. We had an almost full-strength attendance – including our Man in the North (Martin). Pete Smith and Ray Springthorpe were subsequent country attendees in later sessions.



The above shot is 8 April practice (Fieldtown). Len was not in disgrace – his machine lacked a working camera.

As time went on our zooms were illuminated by Pete Bradley green screening the pub where we should have been dancing – and ritually consuming his traditional fare, peanuts.



Pete at The Fox, Denchworth

May Morning

Magdalen College posted a video of the choir doing the usual songs



IW had already arranged to have its virtual May event in the evening. There was a good turnout, 18 men and amongst other chat the usual Teddy Hall breakfast songs were sung



Sem – May Carol



Pete – Hal-An-Tow

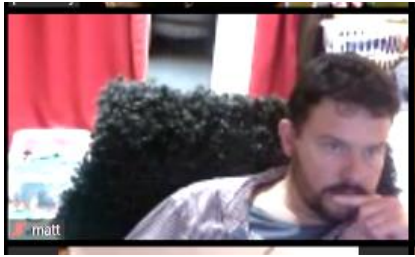


Clive- Hail, Hail the First of May O



Len – a song he sang as a lad taking the May Garland around Piddington. This had been caught on camera.





Tunes were played by
Matt, Graham and Simon



Pete gave a rendition of
Looking on the Bright Side of Life
And Jim provided a poem



Jackerwocky

Twás May Day, and slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the street:
All mimsy were the border hordes,
And cloggies stamped their feet.

“Beware the Jack-in-Green, my son!
The leaves that bite, the branches catch!
Beware the Ancient Man, and shun
The frumtious Band of Scratch”.

They took their morris sticks in hand;
Long time the parking place they sought-
Then rested they by the Rose Lane tree
And stood a while in thought.

As they in uffish thought stood by
The Jack-in-Green, of mighty fame
Came cap’ring up the street called High
And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! a dancing fight
Their morris sticks went cracker-crack!
They left May Morn, and with delight
They went galumphing back.

“And didn’t thou dance with Jack-in-Green?
Come to the pub, my beamish boys
O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!
All chortled in their joys”.

Twás May Day, and slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the street:
All mimsy were the border hordes,
And cloggies stamped their feet.

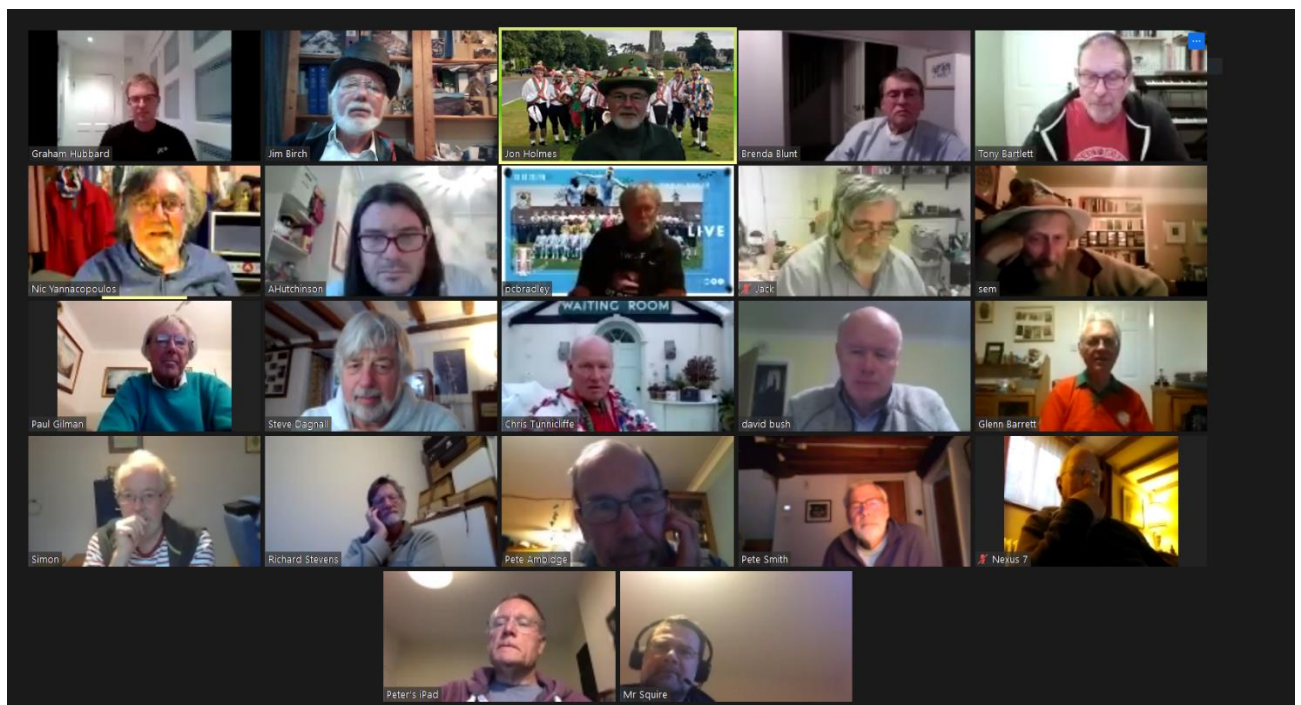
Virtual Night Out with Kennet MM

10 June 2010

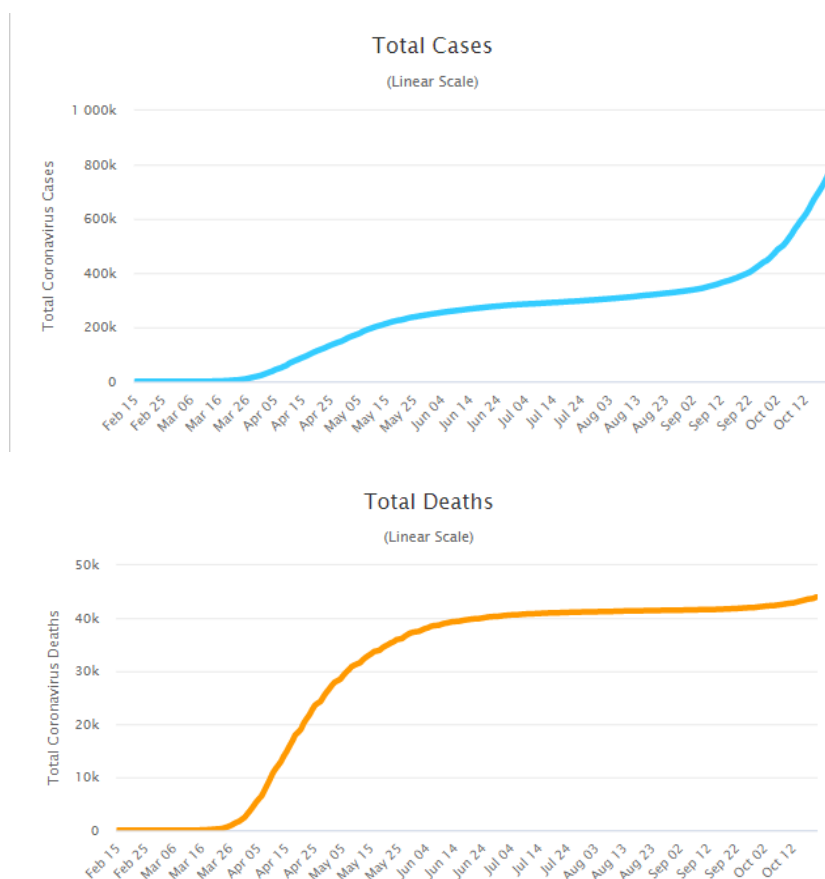


Pub of the Year 2020: Berkshire 'gem' The Bell Inn with 'great beer' and outdoor loo scoops title

In the year that The Bell at Aldworth was Pub of the Year for the second time we could only meet up with the brother's-in-law by Zoom



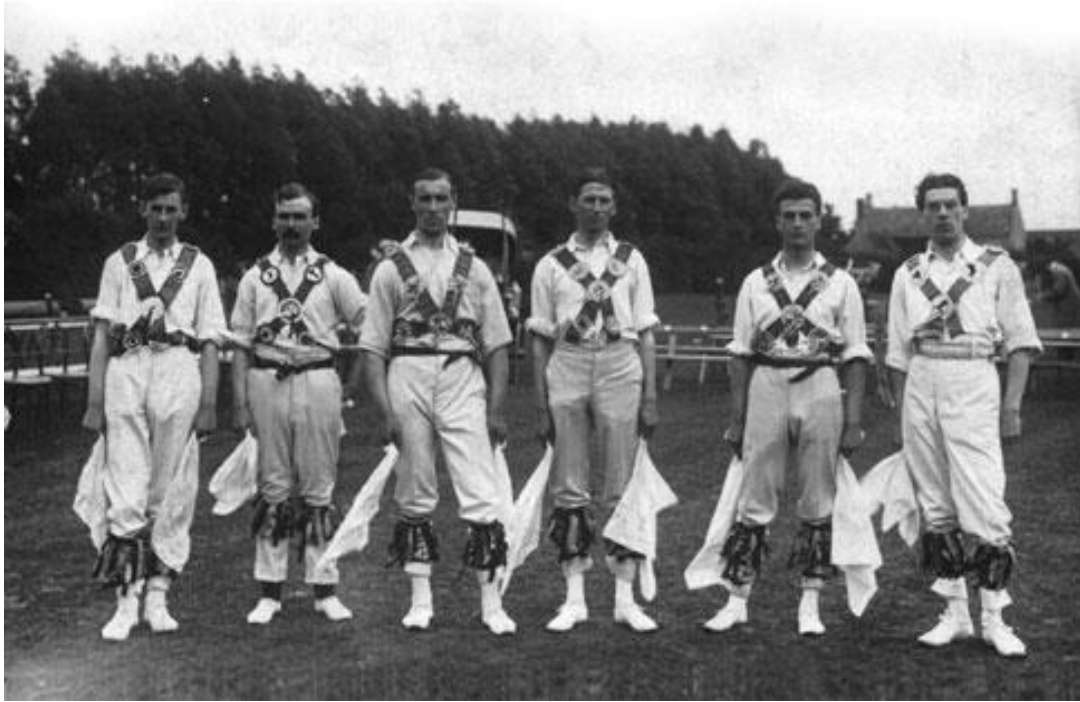
PLAGUE REVIEW – OCT 2020



Although shutdown mitigated the effect of the virus it did not sufficiently contain the outbreak to allow dancing so the entire summer season was lost. A second wave of infection began at the beginning of the autumn so it was deemed too risky for practices to start and the AGM was held by Zoom.



Odds and Sods



"This week I 'ave mostly been wearing white"

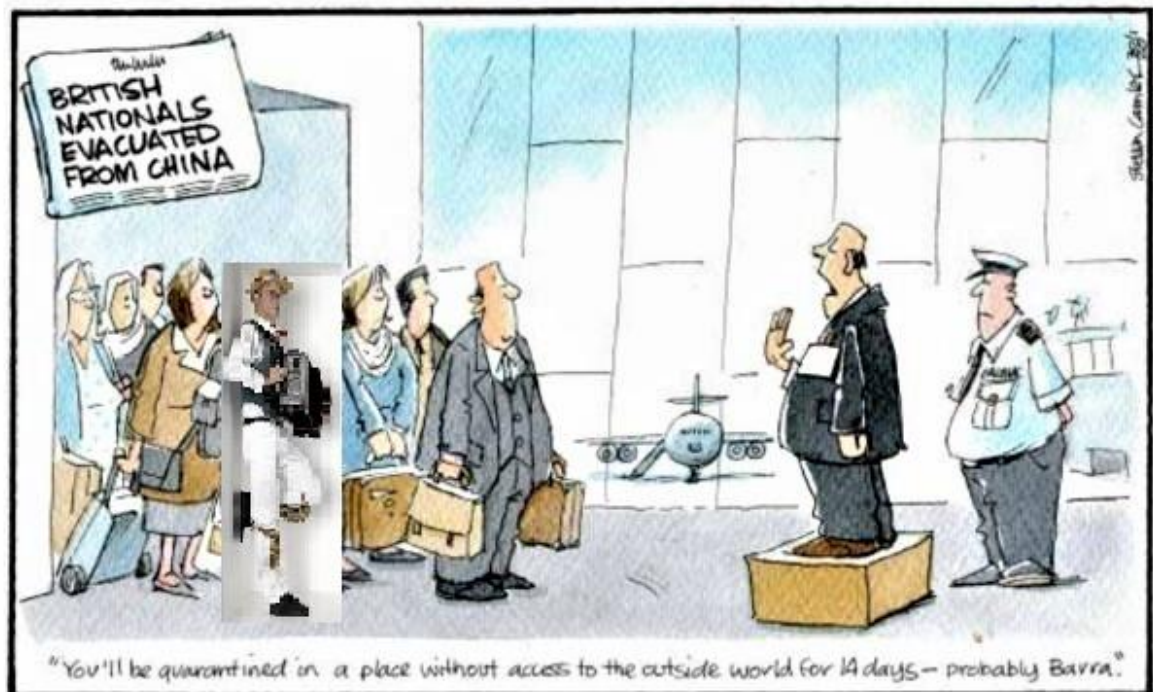


With no dancing and not much to report the archivist had time on his hands so the bits and pieces section of this year's volume is bigger than normal. Some of it was circulated before Zoom meetings – which also usually attracted notes on traditions from the side's morris historians.

Foreman Trapped in China

"Wuhan, a city of 11 million, was suddenly quarantined on Thursday morning (23rd January), with residents given a 10am deadline before road, rail and air transport links were severed indefinitely in an effort to contain the virus, which is a similar pathogen to Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and can spread between humans."

Graham was in Wuhan on business when the coronavirus outbreak centred on that city led to all travel being suspended. He has since appeared on numerous TV channels and in the press, with his tale of how he had tried various ways to get out but was now stuck. He was eventually rescued and returned to UK on 31 January where he was quarantined for 14 days at a hospital on the Wirral.



A Mighty Fall



Early in the year Pete Mac took a high speed tumble which resulted in a smashed hip. He was just looking forward to escaping from prolonged house confinement when Covid measures locked him up again.

Jason O'Rourke



1980s



1999



2020

Younger son of Brien O'Rourke, Jason danced with us in the late 70s/early80s (as did his brother) starting at the age of 7. He also played the melodeon for us precociously early.

He went to university in Belfast and subsequently stayed there becoming active on the traditional music scene. He has made a number of records and performed in Ireland and abroad.

More information is at <http://jasonorourke.info/> and his 1999 album, The Bunch of Keys, can be heard at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=TVYrg07NnWU>

His current instruments are a pair of Jeffries anglo-concertinas in C/G and Bflat/F

From Our Northern Correspondent



Zetland Lifeboat Museum Redcar

Grand picture of the Zetland lifeboat museum housing the oldest lifeboat in the world on top of which is the Coastguard lookout station!

Much relief now that Mr Hubbard is back in dear old "Blighty"

Laur drove to Brize to watch the plane land!

Thanks (on behalf of Graham) for the thoughts of I.W.M.M. over this worrying time, he will be going nuts separated from his Melodican!

Thanks also from me following my receiving of the 60th year celebratory volume, I was happy to have been with you for Mayday and also for the excellent bus tour & meal, well done to all and thanks again us ice-o-lated northern types appreciate such considerations! I am still dancing with "Black Diamond" which keeps my hand (and feet) in fact that I can come and dance with you at sometime this summer!

all the best from Lillie & me up here!

wassail Martin



Towards the end of the noughties some Icknield Way men got together with others to form the show team Phosphorus, so called because performances were with flaming sticks and flaming “hankies”. They only performed for a short time but made an impression and are well worth commemorating in the archive as an IW lateral thinking offshoot.



www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbzGzIjoQ5U



Also: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JYh3-SH1Wiw> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tMni4HrxYIQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j3ZOH0dkMCY> (see 1 min 20 sec)

Kennet Konnections



Kennet are regarded as our brothers-in-law and we have shared many a dance-out with them. The connection goes back to the formation of IW when the old boys borrowed Ian Dunmur to play for them.

Later our main muso, Joe Marns, occasionally returned the favour. There have also been joint dancers, Clive Blunt, Ali Hutchinson and Matt Smee.

The following are a few souvenir photos from recent years.

Kennet and Ickniel – United in Marriage!

Saturday, April 14th 2007



Ian Hutchinson (KM man and son of KM man) married Sarah Foster (daughter of IW man)

Early in the year we exchange Ales



2012 – Rob entertains

2016 – KW make their traditional start



2010 – the usual mystery pickles



2017 – our new Adderbury show dance



2019 – A woman!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



2010- KM put on a show at our Ale.
As does now defunct Black Prince –
led by ex IW Max Williams

2014 – Pete MacSquire entertains,
and KM do that dance again



Later in the year it's our meet-ups at Aldworth



2016 and 2019 – in the rain

2017 – in the sunshine

But always with a warm session



Moving further afield we occasionally have joint representation at Saddleworth Rushcart



2013

Lord and Lady Blunt of
Tuppermill host the KM & IW
Travelling Fellows at Friday
Supper.



A joint show dance



While back in Berkshire (occupied and otherwise) we have attended each other's DoDs



2009 KM man arrives for early breakfast at IW DoD



2019 – lunch time at KM's DoD

And in 2013 danced with Redding Moreys Dauncers at Redding 500



We have even been out of the country with our neighbours



2010

A three-country tour organised by
Ferrette Morris Men

And we have shown up to celebrate each other's significant birthdays



Show dance at KM's 50th DoD (2007) – where KM did silly things in the evening



In 2009- KM joined us on our 50th Tour



A decade later we were dancing at KM's 60th DoD (2017)



And they joined our 60th Tour in 2019

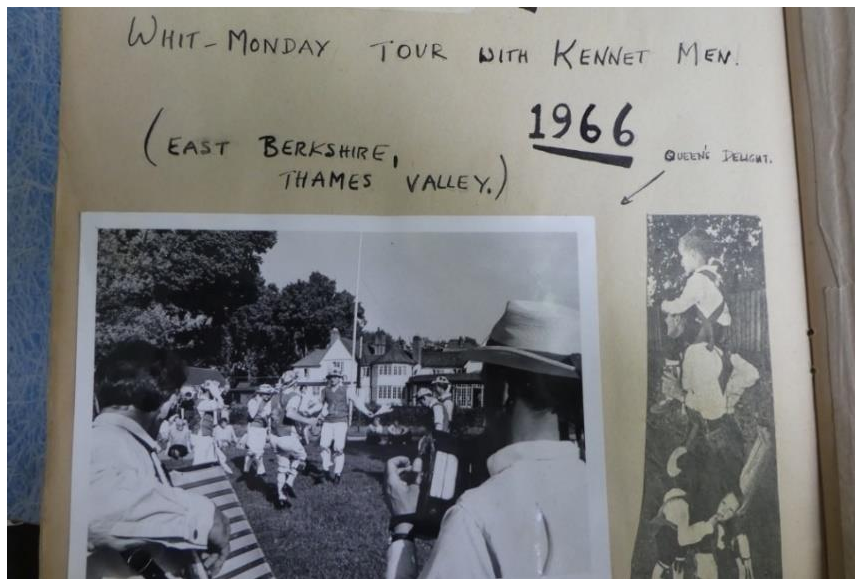


Some memories of early days (compiled by Sem)

Whitman's Albany Jig-Saw

Icknield Way Morris Men dancing at Streatly/Goring to music provided by 2 Kennet musicians, Ian Dunmur and Mick Bacchus.





1966 Whit Monday tour with Kennet - Sonning



Max Williams dancing at Kennet Ale 1985



Clive Allen, after a relaxing lunch on a Cuphill Tour 27th July 1985



IWMM Ale 1987



IWMM Ale 1988



IWMM Ale 1988



IWMM Ale 1988



IWMM Ale 1989



Newbury Mass Dance Kennet RM 1989



1990

And intermediate years



At IW 40th 1999



Goring 2001

Sides older than Icknield Way – there are not many



Greensleeves Morris Men, founded 1926, is one (photo 1929)

Of the sides which are members of the Ring only 25% are older than Icknield Way

This includes most of the “traditional” sides! Of the 18 sides which are associated with traditional villages only 5 are older than Icknield Way.

Abingdon (ATMD), Bampton (TBMD+ BTMM), Chipping Camden and Headington are older. Mr Hemmings (Abingdon), Bampton Village, Adderbury (x 3), Brackley, Ducklington, Eynsham, Ilmington, Kirtlington, Leominster, Lichfield and Winster are all younger.



Icknield Way Morris Men, founded 1959 (photo 1966)

More Old Photos

Clive Blunt provided these photos which came from the collection of Kennet man Bill Franklin



Goring – date unknown



Feb 1969

Derek Hunt's wedding

Dancing at their wedding



According to tradition, Morris dancers always dress up in their colourful clothing when they dance. But on this occasion, bridegroom Robert Hart, who works at Harwell, had to be sold man out and wear more conventional clothing for his wedding.

Mr. Hart, of Hamfield, Wantage, is a member of the Locksley Way Morris Men, and his companions were at Wantage Parish Church to celebrate his wedding to Miss Rosalind Coote, also of Hamfield, Wantage, the second daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. Coote, who were Empire line shipowner with nylon trim and a hood and train of lace.

Robert's best man was his brother, Mr. Reg Hart, and the bridesmaid was Alison Coote, the bride's sister. Photo: Studio Atlanta, Didcot.

Air ideas on town —plea to public

BASINGSTOKE Council of Social Service is appealing to organisations in the town not to miss the opportunity of putting forward their ideas at a community conference on Basingstoke's development.

The community conference is to be held in June. Representatives of Basingstoke County Council, Basingstoke Development Group and town council will be there to discuss recommendations for a five-yearly review of the town plan.

Organisations and members of the public have been invited to the conference to put forward their ideas.

Mr. J. Wiggett, chairman of the council of social service,

said: "The success of our democratic system of government depends on the individual citizen exercising his right to vote and to make his views known, both to his elected representative in Parliament or local authority and to public servants in central and local government."

"Due to the complexity of modern society and the ever-increasing intervention of government in every aspect of our daily lives, there is a tendency for individuals to feel that it is all beyond them and that they can only leave it to those who know."

"The director of town development is to be congratulated in this initiative which will enable the town to contribute to the next stage of planning. We cannot afford to miss the opportunity to make our views known."

BOY CYCLIST DIED FROM HEAD INJURIES

STEPHEN Neighbour, 10, of Rickman Close, Bracknell, died in Heatherwood Hospital, Ascot, from head injuries and internal bleeding. It was said when the inquest was opened at Bracknell yesterday.

Stephen was fatally injured when his bicycle was in collision with a car in Harmanwater Road, Bracknell, on Sunday. He died on Tuesday.

Evidence of identification was given by his father, Mr. Michael Neighbour, a shop manager.

East Berks coroner Mr Bryan Williams adjourned the inquest until April 11.

Mar 1969

Bob Hart's wedding

Museum Appearance

The archivist was surprised to find this entry on Vale & Downland Museum Facebook – a retweet from Oxford Museum. It was one of a number of morris related photos posted by Oxford Museum on its Oxfordshire People section of its website.



Get your dancing clothes for [#MorrisDanceMonday](#)

[#ThisIsNotJust](#) a waistcoat, this is a Marks and Spencer waistcoat, honest. It may be hard to believe, but this snappy number upcycled a [#1960s](#) waistcoat from [#marksandspencer](#) and was used used by the [#IcknieldWay](#) Morris Men until the late 1990s. Better than a luminous vest.

[#Oxfordshire](#) [#OxonMuseums](#) [#FolkDance](#) [#MuseumMonday](#) [#LocalHistory](#)

[#Oxfordshire](#) [#OxonMuseums](#) [#FolkDance](#) [#MuseumMonday](#) [#LocalHistory](#)

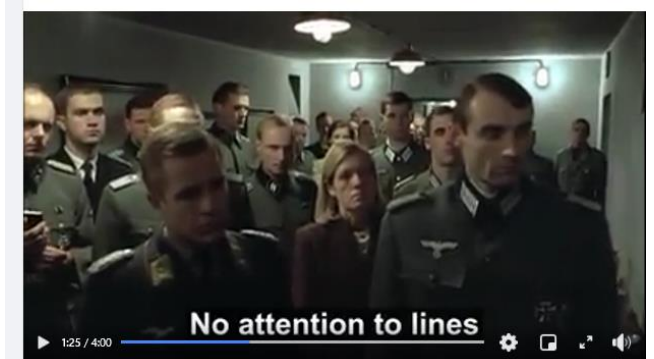
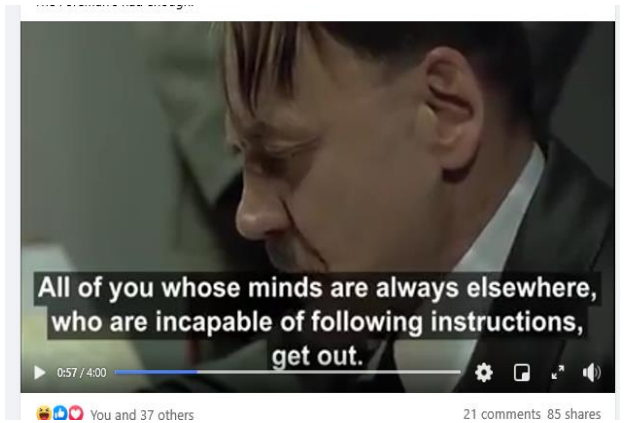
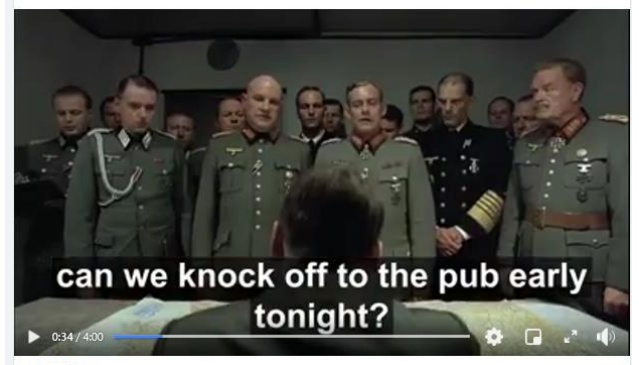
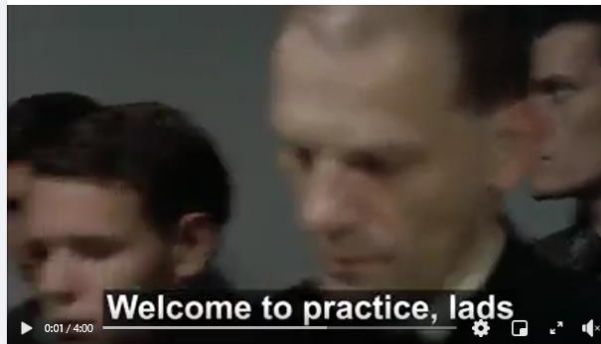
The Oxfordshire Museum

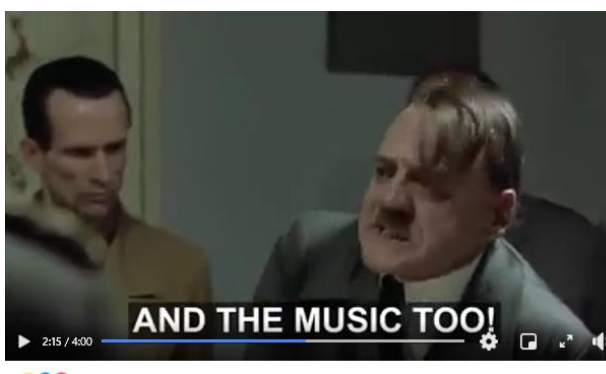
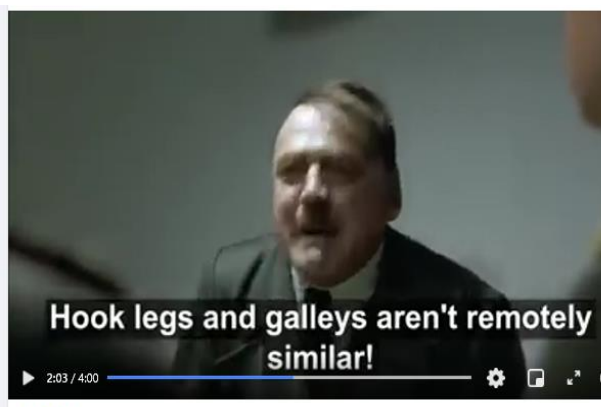


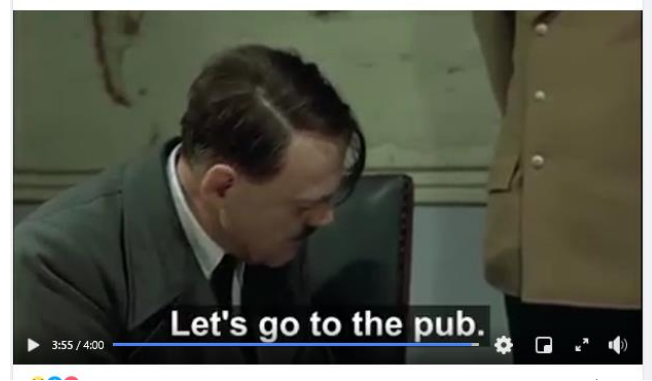
Enquiry of men who were active in IW in the 90s have not provided any information relating to this jacket.

DER FÜHRERBUNKER MORISKENTÄNZER

The foreman throws a wobbly







For the benefit of future generations
a word of explanation.

Der Untergang (Downfall) was a
2004 German film of the last days of
the Third Reich in which Hitler was
magnificently played by Bruno Gatz.

The “rant in the bunker” scene
spawned numerous on-line
parodies. This is a morris related
one which appeared. It works well
because the sentiments probably
reflect the inner thoughts of many
foremen.

Clips are a selection from the four
minute video.

<https://www.facebook.com/527524957/posts/10157511189154958/>



German morris dancers are not a figment
of the imagination. In 1480 Erasmus
Grasser of Munich created 16 statues of
moriskentänzer to go in the city's new
Rathaus

Everest Morris Men



Mallory



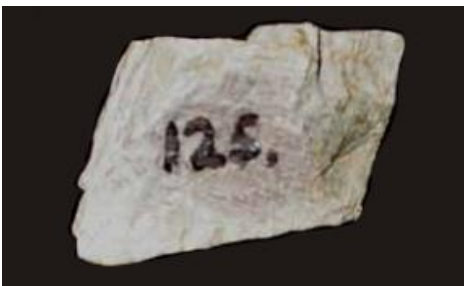
Wager

In 1924 George Mallory and Sandy Irvine left Camp 6 (27,000ft) and set off for the summit of Everest. They were never seen again until Mallory's body was found lower down the mountain in 1999. Despite decades of speculation it is unlikely that they reached the summit. The interest to IW is that Mallory was a morris man. He danced with Cambridge MM while a student and was caught on camera (right front)



1908 - dance interlude in a performance of Comus

A later Cambridge dancer was Lawrence Wager who was climber and geologist on the 1933 Everest expedition. Together with Percy Wynn-Harris he reached 28,200ft (having found Irvine's 1924 ice-axe on the way) – a non-oxygen height record which stood until 1978. After posts at Reading and Durham Wager became Professor of Geology at Oxford in 1950 and ran the department until his death in 1965. The 244 rocks Wager collected around Everest are held at Oxford University Museum of Natural History.



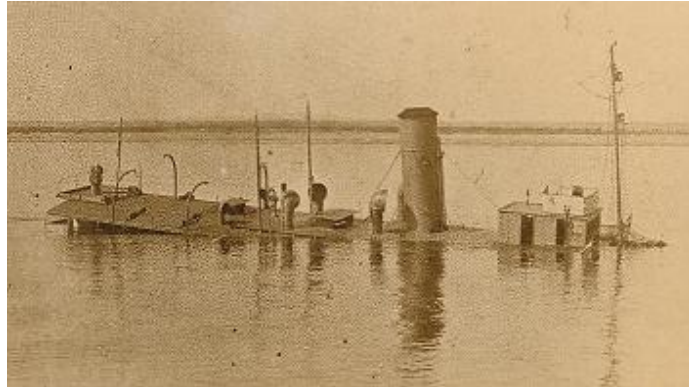
Metamorphosed limestone collected at 26,700ft

Royal Navy Morris Dancers

In both the first and second world wars the Navy had Dance class ships and in each case one was named "*Morris Dance*"

In WW1 there were the Dance-class minesweepers. They were originally designed as shallow-draft twin screw-tunnel tugs, and were taken over by the British Admiralty as coastal minesweeping sloops. They were 265 tons, 130ft long and carried one six pounder gun.

The minesweeper *Morris Dance* entered service in April 1919 and was used to sweep coastal areas of Northern Russia. She was sold in May 1920.



HMS Sword Dance – mined in the Dvina river, Russia

In WW2 the Dance class were armed trawlers which were used for anti-submarine work. They were 530 tons, 160ft long and mounted one 4 inch gun and three 20mm anti-aircraft guns

The *Morris Dance* was launched in 1940 and was sold in 1947.



HMS Sword Dance – as unlucky as her predecessor she was sunk in 1942

IW Videos

An incomplete list of videos of Icknield Way MM



May Morn – 2011 – Oddington <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0E0ePRx-er0>

Newbury carnival 2008 – bampton <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfmb4fMHhg4>

Newbury carnival 2013 – Ducklington <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kfmb4fMHhg4>

May Morn 2011 – Adderbury https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8cOn64_AAc

Oxford 2011 – Lichfield https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8cOn64_AAc

Coleshill 2011 – Adderbury https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8cOn64_AAc

Coleshill 2011 more adderbury <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cQlrFaYIU98>

London 2008 Lichfield <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ATXMZJyvhkc>

Wokingham 2014 Bampton <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a0T6lIPOar0>

3 Countries Tour 2010 SH https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tQtv0_mh0gg

3 countries tour 2010 more SH <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ZIR3yFb4TI>

Chippenham 2008 Bledibamp <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e0iEn1Fz9ow>

May morn 2008 Bledington https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XUJoX0eXh_U

Bishopstone 2008 bar stool <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7K0jllqIctI>

Wokingham 2014 fieldtown <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=01Woxu5F30Q>

Uffington 2013 babpton/adderbury <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0KXP37OG9fI>

May morn 1997 adderbury <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCDI5kpLgsM>

Wantage 2012 Lichfield <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jjt0iAXe2B8>

Ardington 2017 – talking https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wenjCJ_e1Qw

Wantage 2011 – adderbury <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nHvGuME-eKs>

May morn 2009 bampton <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HKHTymbATVo>

may morn 2008 bampton https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZCzF_YWBE_c

may morn 2008 SH <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TV1abboiBfQ>

WHS 2009 bampton <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-1Pjlrp3nt0>

Oxford 2011 banpton <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R8MUbss8R-g>

Hendred 2014 – fieldtown <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W82baHdLKVA>

Chippenham 2019 adderbury <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kism8eC0s2s>

Chippenham 2014 broly dance <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i0efFmvbu1E>

Ludlow 1997 SH <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-NDZHpMEkTQ&feature=youtu.be&t=23s>

Ludlow 1997 SH <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-NDZHpMEkTQ&feature=youtu.be&t=7m56s>

Ludlow 1997 Ducklington <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-NDZHpMEkTQ&feature=youtu.be&t=2m40s>

Ludlow 1997 Bledington https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-lt8_H2vuVo&feature=youtu.be&t=5m23s

Ludlow 1997 Headington https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-lt8_H2vuVo&feature=youtu.be&t=4m1s

Ludlow 1997 Adderbury https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-lt8_H2vuVo&feature=youtu.be&t=1m5s

Ludlow 1997 fieldtown

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-YhldXsha6s&feature=youtu.be&t=2m7s>

Ludlow 1997 adderbury https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ZBBguRI3_s&feature=youtu.be&t=11m4s

East Suffolk 1995 bampton

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=50tj7WzIHZg&feature=youtu.be&t=13m45s>

(Ludlow pictures from <http://chapelmorris.org/videos/> - an archive of +700 videos)

Icknield on TV

Midsummer Murders



The opening sequence of Midsummer Murders

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXnEdBo3hVo> - a video clip posted on YouTube by a Dutchman. (The subtitles are dialogue not a comment on the morris)

Sem's music provided the sound track. This was in the 1980s and the lads say IW got £300 plus £150 because shooting over-ran.

The Tudors – Season 2 Episode 7

So. It's May Day 1535.



IW are in the background on this clip <https://autocratonasofa.com/2019/07/10/the-tudors-recap-season-2-episode-7-matters-of-state-part-2/> (second but last video). More featured in another part of the film – in total about 20 seconds (after 14 hours on set). Filmed in Ireland in Sept 2007.

IW got the gig because Martin Foster did the scriptwriter's garden. We got paid about £2500.

Ickniel Way's Bampton

IW used to do Bampton the way every other side (except Bampton) did it. This changed when, in the late 70s, Paul Smith <https://traditionalbamptonmorris.org.uk/side/> and Brien O'Rourke were invited to dance with the Traditional Bampton Morris Dancers although they continued turning out for IWMM. (Tom Bower and Steve Coad who were both IW also joined TBMD at some point). Early in the 80s Brien and Paul offered to teach Ickniel how to dance Bampton as it was then being performed. Their offer was taken up with enthusiasm and we have performed in that dancing style, whose most distinctive difference to "Ring Bampton" is the hey, ever since.

Bad feeling in Bampton had led to a split into two sides in 1927 although shortage of dancers after WW2 caused a coming together before fresh arguments in 1950 resulted once again in two sides, Woodley's side (Traditional Bampton Morris Dancers) and Shergold's side (Bampton Traditional Morris Men). Arnold Woodley died in 1995 and TBMD have since been led by Lawrence Adams. (Frances Shergold died in 2009).

Our Bampton style is as the Woodley side danced it around 1980 and our repertoire contains a few dances, such as the Woodley Waltz, which TBMD have composed and which are not in the Bacon book. As far as the archivist is aware IWMM is the only side, except for the Bampton teams, which performs other than "Ring Bampton. We are uniquely (apart from TBMD obviously) a "Woodley Bampton" side.



Arnold Woodley



Frances Shergold



Paul playing for us



Paul playing for them



Brien dancing for them



Brien dancing for us



We do a hey

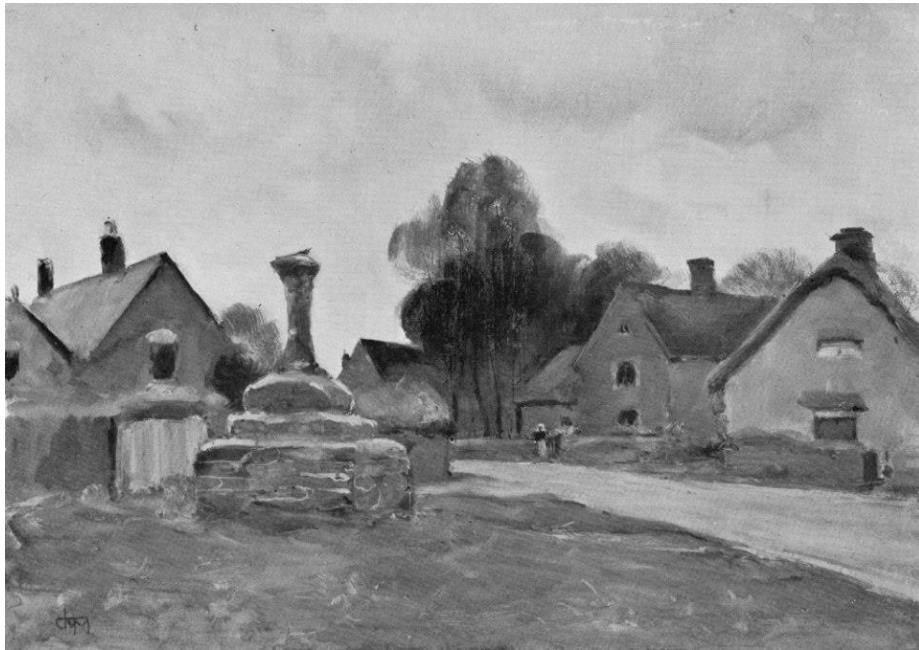


They do a hey

(musicians are ex-IW Paul Smith and Steve Coad)



Charney Basset Cross



Pre WWI painting

The cross is believed to date from the fourteenth century and is thought to have been erected as a market cross (a structure used to denote where the right to hold a market had been granted). At some time, after it lost its cross, a sundial was placed on top. This can be seen in the painting but the gnomon has since broken off. After WWI the middle of three steps was replaced by a war memorial stone. The raised rubble base although old is not thought original.

The Charney Basset Cross has now entered Icknield Way tradition as the only place where we dance The Rose (Fieldtown). This is normally an annual event as part of a pub tour.



Wyverns, Dragons, Stags and Horses



43 Division formation patch



Wessex Regiment cap badge

The **43rd Wessex Division** came into being as part of the army reorganisation of 1908. Soldiers were recruited from the counties within the boundaries of the ancient Kingdom of Wessex. Following distinguished service in WWI the Division was reformed as a West of England Territorial Unit and in 1935 adopted the heraldic emblem of the Kings of Wessex, the wyvern. Restored to full strength the 43rd fought major actions in NW Europe in WWII. After the war the division continued as a TA formation but was disbanded in 1967.

The **Wessex Regiment** was a TA infantry regiment between 1971 and 1995 when it became the TA part of The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment and later The Royal Rifle Volunteers. Most recently its remnants can be traced to the formation of The Rifles.



Cap badges of the Royal Berkshire Regiment and the later Royal Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment



The county regiment was “**the Berkshires**”. This was raised in 1756 as the 66th Berkshire Regiment of Foot. In 1840 the Berkshires badge became a Chinese dragon – the result of being involved in the First Opium War. In 1881 it became Princess Charlotte’s Berkshire Regiment, renamed The Royal Berkshire regiment in 1921. In 1951 amalgamation made it part of the Royal Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment and a further amalgamation in 1994 resulted in the Royal Gloucester, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment (when the dragon disappeared from the badge). Finally, it was wrapped into The Rifles in 2007.



Berkshire Yeomanry cap badge

Another Berkshire military unit was the **Berkshire Yeomanry** which was a volunteer force raised in 1794. It went through numerous incarnations and affiliations (cavalry, artillery, armoured reconnaissance) finally becoming a signals squadron which now forms part of 39 Signals Regiment. Its badge since at least WWI was the Uffington White Horse.



Royal Berkshire Militia badge

The county infantry volunteer force was the **Berkshire Militia**, raised in 1759. In 1881 it became 3rd Battalion of the Berkshire Regiment. The battalion transferred to the Special Reserve in the 1908 army reforms and ceased to function (was disembodied is the technical term) in 1919 although it existed on paper until 1953. The Berkshire Militia badge featured a stag under an oak, a symbol long associated with the county.

Where it all started?

The Balochi are spread across the border areas of southern Afghanistan, eastern Iran and a large part of the Pakistan province of Balochistan.

They have traditional male set dances. As you can see from the photo some involve stick clashing (video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sb6m-nNbNOE> between 1.06 and 1.25min).



The clapping dance is at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f6Dfieet_WU and the sword dance is at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsfUSyap2kw>

The still photo of the stick dancing looks a bit more energetic (must be a revival side) than the laid-back style in the nomads' video - and does anyone who went to Spain see a hint of a resemblance to the Douro dancers?

Blackface

2020 was a year of black discrimination demonstrations. This led to the Ring taking action on blackface

STATEMENT FROM THE MORRIS RING OFFICERS RE: THE USE OF FULL BLACK OR SKIN TONE FACE MAKE UP BY MORRIS RING MEMBER SIDES

This matter has been under review for some years, with statements and advice to sides being issued by successive Squires.

These have increasingly asked sides to consider their continued use of such face make up, the effect it has on their audience, the safety of their side members, and what alternatives could be used to achieve the same effect. Many member sides have heeded this advice and stopped using it.

The issue has however remained under constant review by the Officers because although it has a complex and uncertain history, it is perceived by some as racist.

During the current lockdown and suspension of Morris activity, the Black Lives Matter protests and more significantly counter protests by far right groups have brought a decisive shift in how issues such as this are viewed and debated in public life.

The use of full Black or skin tone face make up has become part of a range of symbols used in political campaigning. Most worrying of all to the officers is that justifications for using it based on culture/tradition have been appropriated by the political far right.

The fact that some feel the practice to be racist should be enough for sides to realise it is no longer acceptable and is wrong when viable alternatives clearly exist. Those that wish to continue are now consciously taking Morris into a political debate. The Morris Ring is an apolitical organisation and such sides who do not change must continue that debate outside of membership of the Morris Ring.

As an organisation, we are open to clubs to join who agree to uphold the standards and dignity of Morris. The Officers unanimously agree that the use of such face make up now falls short of this test and is wrong. They advise member sides who wish to remain in the Morris Ring to stop this practice.

This matter has been discussed over time with the Morris Federation and Open Morris as part of the JMO. There has inevitably been recent press interest and as part of our discussion within the JMO a copy of a press release sent to the Telegraph today is attached for information.

The officers therefore are to take the following steps with immediate effect:-

- No new applications to join the Morris Ring from sides using such face make up will be accepted.
- All current member sides who use this are to be contacted by the Officers to discuss supporting them to review alternatives, discuss the issue with sides who have successfully changed to alternatives and agree a timescale with them to do so. If your side is affected by this change please contact bagman@themorrisring.org for assistance
- Further steps may be required in time and the Officers will update the membership

One final point arises with regard to the public liability insurance obtained by the JMO.

In discussions with the JMO insurance broker on updating terms of Morris Ring membership, the use of such face make up potentially being a problem in maintaining cover is also apparent. Further advice is being requested before the renewal of the insurance policy in January 2021.

However given the volatility of public protests, using such face make up may be viewed as an aggravating factor such as to void any cover. Any update will be shared with the membership as a matter of urgency once confirmed.

Although the issue of insurance has not driven the Officers' decision, it is a further indication of how serious this matter has now become.

3rd July 2020

Peter Simpson - Squire of the Morris Ring

Jon Melville – Bagman of the Morris Ring

Clayton Francis – Treasurer of the Morris Ring

Simon Newman – Squire Elect of the Morris Ring

Ed Worrall – Chair of the Morris Ring Advisory Council

Appendix – Press release

JMO Statement for the Telegraph, 3rd July 2020

JMO said:

Our traditions do not operate in a vacuum. While no morris dancer wants to cause offence, we must recognise that full face black or other skin tone makeup is a practice that has the potential to cause deep hurt.

Morris is a living tradition and it is right that it has always adapted and evolved to reflect society. Over the past few years, many morris teams have already proactively taken the decision to stop using full face black makeup to avoid causing offence or hurt. We now believe we must take further steps to ensure the continued relevance and inclusivity of the tradition.

The Joint Morris Organisations (The Morris Federation, The Morris Ring, and Open Morris) have therefore agreed that each of them will take action to eliminate this practice from their membership. Teams that continue to use full face black or other skin tone make up will find they are no longer part of the mainstream morris community, be covered by JMO public liability insurance, or invited to take part in events organised or sponsored by the JMO.

Morris is a unique cultural tradition of which we should be rightly proud. We want people from all races and backgrounds to share in this pride and not be made to feel unwelcome or uncomfortable by any element of a performance.

Joint Morris Organisations, comprising The Morris Federation, The Morris Ring and Open Morris
3rd July 2020



Red Leicester - Graham's dad will be legal providing no cheeses object