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## **INTRODUCTION TO BOOK THREE**

The third decade had Dolphin doing more of the same and settling into being a normal side of regular blokes doing what Morris sides do. It was another decade where the taking of photographs was left to chance and many events went unrecorded, and many documents were not saved.

There was a reunion in 1994 and Ring Meeting's organised by Dolphin in 1989 and 1995. Chris Villiers came to prominence as 'The Calvados Kid' in Jersey. Jon Melville married Emma and Ian Stewart married Hicky.

The side was presented with plastic plant pot fezzes at Richmond.

In 1997 at the end of the decade the men took a trip to Romania and took part in a folk festival that was not without incident.

The days of having twenty eight men on the books were left behind, and membership numbers settled down to around fourteen men.

Ian Stewart and Joe Oskiewicz got into a bit of a panic when they thought they had left Reverend Kenneth Loveless in a hotel room, to die!

ANDY PADMORE

## CHAPTER TWENTY ONE

1988 – Twenty and not out

In January 1988 NTMC was celebrating its twenty-first birthday. On Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January the usual club night for NTMC was advertised as, *'to begin the revelry'*. The following evening a ceilidh was held at West Park Pavilion where there would be, *'Dancing, singing and displays'*.

In the March edition of 'FOLK 88' there appeared the following piece;

### ***Twenty-one today!***

#### ***Chris Orme went to a ceilidh.***

The NTMC's 21st anniversary ceilidh was held at the West Park Pavilion, West Bridgford, home to the clubs dances right from the start. The room was packed to overflowing, with dancers enjoying the music of *Eath-reel* and *Flash Packet* two excellent bands, with great calling from *Sue Burnett*, *Roy Dyson* and *Ian Smith*, who had no difficulty in filling the floor. All this plus entertaining displays from *Greenwood Clog*, *Dolphin Morris*, *Owd 'Oss Mummers*, *Sullivans Swords*, and *Black Cap Rapper* Well played *Ron Cossor*, who filled in for a missing member of

*Black Cap* despite never having danced with them before. Song spots were by *Notts Alliance* and *Sandy Boyle* whilst *Ian Stewart* treated (I think thats the word) everyone to some tunes on his bagpipes. The whole thing was a fitting way to celebrate the clubs 21 years and to acknowledge the hard work and enthusiasm of all those associated with it in the past.

*Editors note:- A fine example of a folk revival club making a contribution to the dance world, social and ritual. Congratulations!*

While NTMC got the 'key of the door', Dolphin were quietly becoming a mere TWENTY years old. Many teams fail before they reach this milestone, and Ian Stewart in his annual Foreman's report of September 1988 said, *'Once again we held our place as one of the top dozen or so clubs in the Ring in terms of performance standard'*. Later in the report Ian has this to say, *'...and at Greensleeves we were publicly hailed as 'a club that can always be relied on to put on a good show'*.

Good as these comments sound, it would probably be hard to prove, but it does say a lot about the side. Dolphin were confident and still enthusiastic for the Morris, and Ian Stewart never once failed to point this out in his annual foreman's reports.

In 1988 Ian finished his report with, *'I close by saying: While constructive criticism is fine, please bear in mind how good we really are! Our job is to keep up and improve an already excellent standard'*.

So no signs of flagging on the part of Mr Stewart, onward and upward as they say.

Dolphin may have been celebrating a twentieth anniversary but the fact of it is not mentioned in the minutes of the AGM nor is it reflected in the number of photographs taken or memorabilia kept!

The pub tour season ran to fourteen Thursdays. From May 12<sup>th</sup> to August 11<sup>th</sup>. The first tour started one week later than would have been after a request from Ian Stewart to move the whole tour season back by one week.



The Annual Feast of the Foresters Morris Men was held on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> March. Dolphin were invited and deposits were sent for seven men: Ian Stewart, Ian Ambrose, Chris Gigg, Simon Haydock, Nick Murphy, Joe Oskiewicz and Steve Daniels.

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1988, St Georges Day, and Dolphin were in Lister Gate fundraising, but the law of diminishing returns dictated that the bag would be much reduced compared to previous occasions. It was becoming uneconomical as an event and the men were finding it increasingly difficult to be enthusiastic about it. Joe Oskiewicz at the AGM pointed out that *'the bag pint was now taking 25% of the days takings!'*



During the evening Ian Stewart and Bob Hine had booked places at the Annual Feast of Sergeant Musgrave's Dance which took place in 'Parklands', Long Eaton.



The eighth Gate to Southwell, since the revival began, was on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> May. Sides taking part in 1988 were;

Dolphin Morris Men  
Micklebarrow Morris Men  
Broadstone Morris Men  
Calverton Morris Men  
Aidleys Morris Dancers  
Sergeant Musgrave's Dance  
Leen Valley Morris  
Black Pig Border

The procession was as usual accompanied by walkers from the 'Smile Don't Stare' fund.

All the participants were provided with a free drink at the conclusion of the day, to be taken at

the event.



Bob Hine and Ted Hutchby at the Council House, and handing over the Southwell Pence at the Minster. The wooden cross carried by Ted was actually made by him.



The pole on which the cross is mounted has tape in the colours of Dolphin Morris spiralled around, and the cross itself is painted with ivy entwining it. Each year a side is selected to do a single dance, inside the Minster, during the service. In the picture from 1988 we see the side is made up of dancers from Broadstone, Dolphin, Leen Valley and Calverton.



*Below: During the procession some fool from Dolphin was seen to attempt to walk on water! This would not be Ted Hutchby's only attempt and each would result in damp feet.*



In 1988 Thaxted was on the weekend of June 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>. Dolphin was at the event but for some reason the side's name was not included in the programme and no one took any photographs.



The Annual Derbyshire weekend took place on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> June 1988. Along with Dolphin were Aidleys Morris and Sergeant Musgrave's Dance.



*Above: Looks like a joint Bonny Green Garters for as many as will*



*Nick*



*Dave*



*Simon*



*Mike*



*Joe*



*Ian*

It was at this weekend, Dave Walters recalls, 'That for some reason, best known to himself, Phil Wrigley asked me if he could push a cream cake in my face. Strangely, I agreed to this request! This was at The George, Alstonefield, where we had lunch'. The photograph above says it all.

Dave Walters also recalls that, *'It was at the Hobbit pub that someone stole the mouthpiece of Chris Villiers trombone. It was 'hidden' on top of the pub sign'.* [By all accounts CV was less than amused and the perpetrator would require surgery if Chris found him]



The annual 'Chipperfield' weekend organised by Greensleeves Morris Men was on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> July in 1988.

Seven Dolphin men went along and Joe in his Squires report at the AGM points out, *'It was a complement to be invited to Chipperfield for the Greensleeves weekend again, this more than any other event this year indicates the reputation that Dolphin have acquired over the years!!!'*

Teams attending in 1988 were, Barnsley Longsword, Moulton Morris Men, Thelwall Morris Men, and Dolphin Morris Men.

By varying the combinations of teams at different times it was made possible for each team to dance with each other, something that can often get overlooked when organising weekend tours and there are several sides present.

As the letter of confirmation of attendance from Roy Fenton says, *'with your company, good dancing and Bert Cleaver's cooking all we need for a really successful weekend is good weather and (you knew there was going to be a catch!) a deposit of £5...'*

The World Canoe Marathon Championships took place at Holme Pierrepont Water Sports Centre on July 22<sup>nd</sup> 1988.

The Dolphin Men were to provide entertainment as part of the opening ceremony...the suggestion was a possible maximum of five dances with the musician using the fixed microphone.

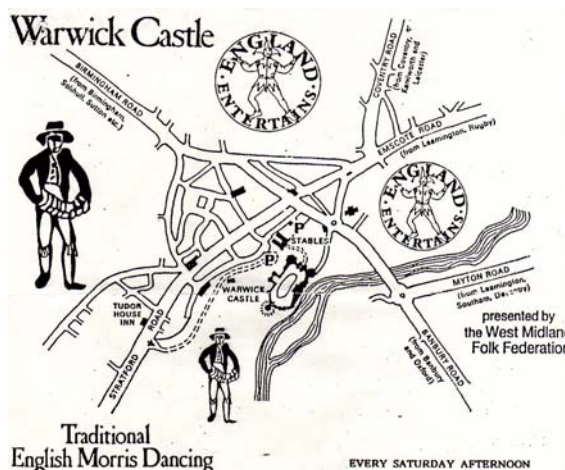


Dave Walters recalls, *'I think I remember this – we danced at the back of County Hall next to the river – although the canoe thing was at Holme Pierrepont'.*

A letter of thanks was received, *'Many thanks for the Dolphin Morris's performance last Friday. It provided an appropriate flavour of English tradition which complemented the weather!'*



Warwick Castle 1988. Dolphin was allocated 20<sup>th</sup> August to perform at three fixed spots timed at 2.30pm, 3.30pm and 4.30pm. Outside of these times dancing could be as decided by individual teams as they saw fit and if they felt fit!







*Mike uni-cycled*



*Jigged*



*and swore when he fell off!*

The AGM in 1988 was held on 29<sup>th</sup> September and twelve men were present. At the reading of the minutes of the previous AGM it was noted that the Kingston-on-Soar Horn Dance had not yet been revived despite last year's decision

Joe Oskiewicz remained in the post of Squire with Steve Daniels his Deputy. Simon Haydock retained the role of Bagman and Mike Wilkinson took on the role of keeper of the Scrapbook. It is not recorded but it is presumed that Dave continued to be called the 'Stick Man'.

John Sweeney put forward a motion that hats be done away with – no reason was noted. After a discussion he withdrew the motion subject to some events being danced without hats (to Squire's discretion).



Mike put forward the motion that the side should join, 'DOLPHIN WATCH', have sweatshirts overprinted with 'Dolphin Morris Men support...' and that the bag from tours be donated to the organisation. This was seconded and passed.

The 1989 Ring Meeting was still in the process, and progressing satisfactorily.

In his Squire's report Joe mentions that, *'we didn't dance at plastic pubs full of plastic people swigging plastic beer'*. He went on later to say, *'we do not need a crusade of bringing the Morris to the lager-classes, but whenever possible we dance at the locations that enable us to gain the maximum satisfaction from our art'*.

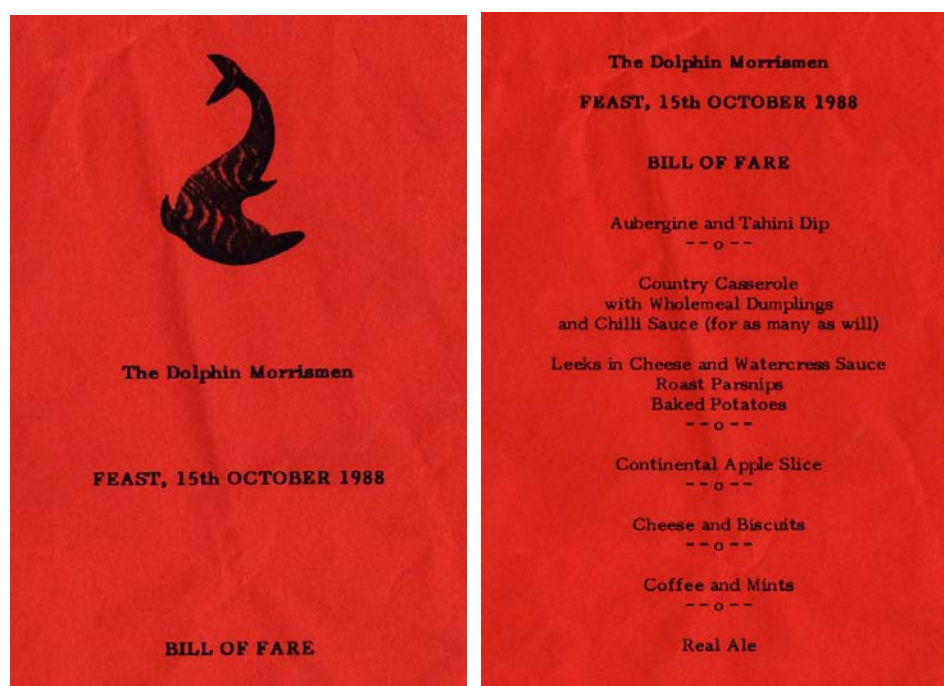
Joe mentions that the Headington tradition now benefits from the introduction of the cross back step dances, and they should become part of the show repertoire in the coming year.

About Mike, Joe says, *'I would like to express the side's thanks and recognition to Mike for his fooling this year. On current performance he is certainly one of the most entertaining fools in the Morris'*.

Simon Haydock listed the paid up members of dolphin for the year as:

Phil Wrigley, John Sweeney, Ian Ambrose, Mike Wilkinson, Nick Murphy, Ken Osborn, Simon Haydock, Ian Stewart, Joe Oskiewicz, Chris Gigg, Pat Tribensee, Steve Daniels, Dave Walters, Bob Hine, Andy Wells, Chris Deuchar, and Ted Hutchby

Mention was made of the Great Nott's Bike Ride and the Duck Race but no other details exist in the archive about these events. Dave Walters recalls, *'At the bike ride we danced at Newark Castle which was at the finishing place or in the vicinity of a watering hole on the route. The Duck Race was probably at Wymeswold, we certainly did one there a couple of times'*.



On Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October 1988 the side organised a feast. All that remains of the event is a copy of the 'Bill of Fare' above and a reference to it being held at Lowdham Village Hall.

Ian Ambrose recalls, 'I prepared a vegetable chilli for the feast with the help of Nick and others. One vegetarian asked if there was any meat in it. Ripley [Morris Men and well known carnivores] offered to bring their own meat the following year'.

A clue that it was part of a weekend of dancing is in a note dated 20<sup>th</sup> October 1988, that is in the archive from Reverend Kenneth Loveless and says,

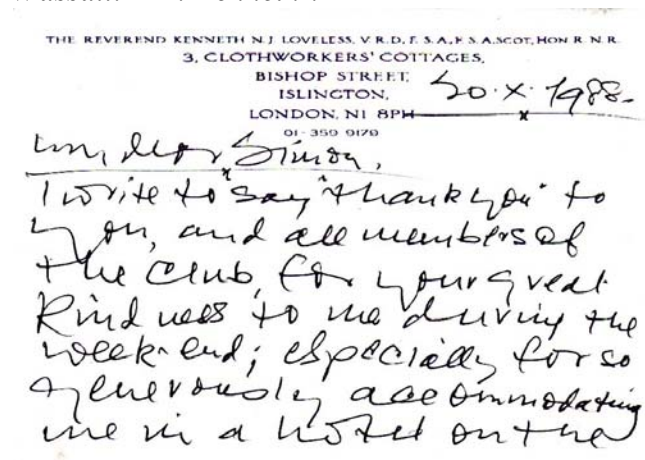
*'My Dear Simon [Haydock],*

*I write to say 'Thank You' to you and all members of the club, for your great kindness to me during the weekend; especially for so generously accommodating me in a hotel on the Saturday evening.*

*I thoroughly enjoyed the whole event – apart from my mis-behaviour at the end of the proceedings on Saturday. It was your generous provision of whiskey after the feast that did for me! Bert had been wining me during the proceedings and I ought to have known better.*

*Please apologise to Ian who took me to the hotel!*

*Wassail. Fr. Kenneth'.*



Left: The first page of the four page note sent by Rev Ken. His writing could sometimes be a little difficult to decipher!

Ian Stewart says, 'basically Rev was almost insensible when the time came to get him back to his dosser. I think he could just about walk, but he wasn't clear which direction he was walking in.'

Joe Oskiewicz says, 'At the feast Ian Ambrose put bowls of chilli masquerading as ketchup on the tables. It certainly fooled Rev Ken – cos he whacked a huge dollop on his meal! This possibly explains why he had to drink copiously afterwards.

It should have been one of those magic moments Rev Ken playing Kimber's concertina for Bert's jig [Bert Cleaver] – but the alcohol got the better of him – oh well.

Ken spent the night in the hotelly restaurant place just up from Lowdham, it's called Springhead Springfield Springbank or something [Springwater] and it was Ian Stewart and myself who took him there after the feast, and yes the old bloke was seriously pissed. It required two of us to guide/carry him to his room. He slumped on his bed well pissed, fell back and cracked his head on the wall – a huge crack!

Both Ian and I were quite concerned but Ken said something to the effect, "Leave me dear boys" and so we did.

On the way back to the hall I can remember having a conversation with Ian about Ken and we postulated what would happen should Dolphin be responsible for finishing off a Morris legend and icon. I didn't sleep too well that night obviously worried about Ken, so in the morning Ian and myself went up to the hotelly place half expecting the worse – and there he was just finishing his breakfast – bright as a button'.

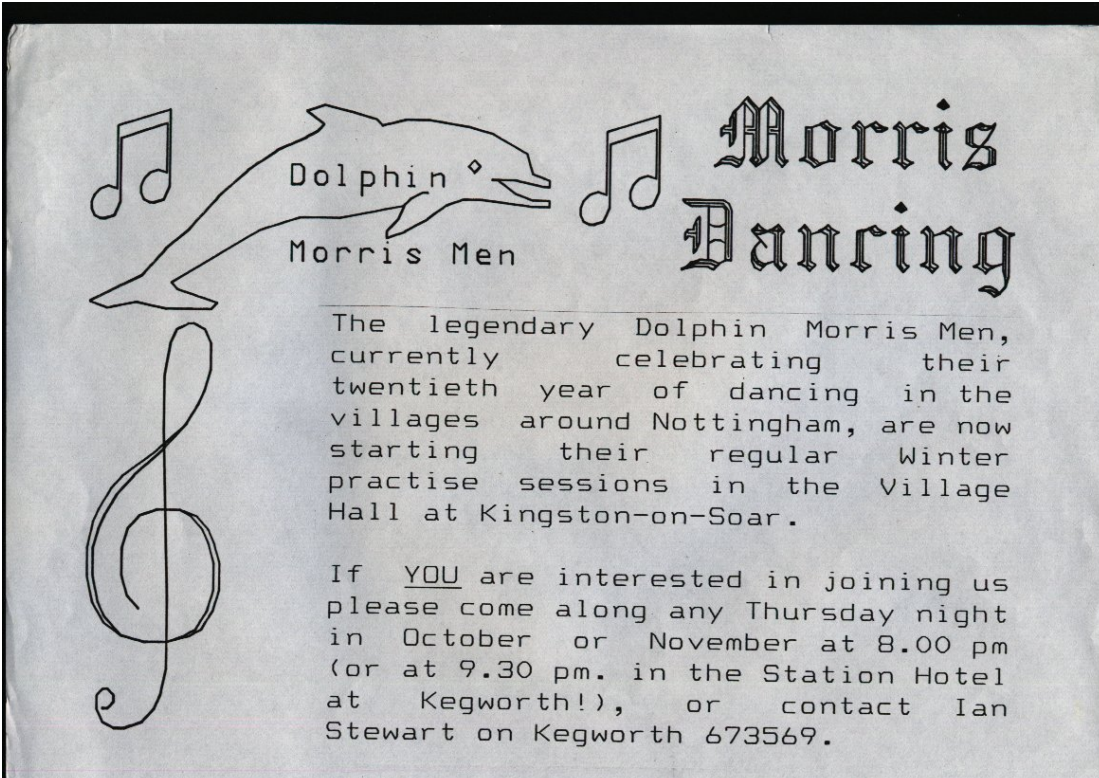
Available information suggests that the following sides attended the weekend, with the number of men noted in indices:

Greensleeves MM (9), Standon MM (6), Man Friday MM (7), Calverton MM (7), Micklebarrow (1), Packington (2), Ripley (4), and Dolphin (12)

Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1988 and Dolphin were once more in Lister Gate dancing to raise funds for the sides bank account.

No new members are recorded for 1988.

Below: An early recruiting poster designed (using a computer) by John Sweeney



**Morris Dancing**

The legendary Dolphin Morris Men, currently celebrating their twentieth year of dancing in the villages around Nottingham, are now starting their regular Winter practise sessions in the Village Hall at Kingston-on-Soar.

If YOU are interested in joining us please come along any Thursday night in October or November at 8.00 pm (or at 9.30 pm. in the Station Hotel at Kegworth!), or contact Ian Stewart on Kegworth 673569.



## CHAPTER TWENTY TWO

1989 – Dolphin's second Ring Meeting and the 21<sup>st</sup> birthday of the side

There are more photographs in the Dolphin archive for 1989 than for any other year in the 1980's but even so lots of events go by without any information being saved other than a single reference.



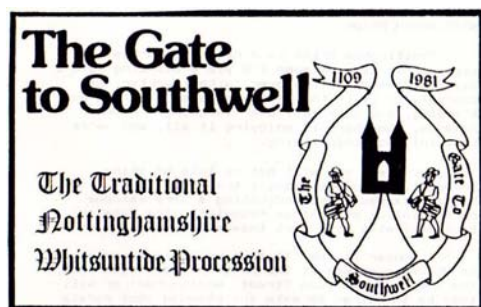
On Saturday 28th January 1989 Ian Ambrose, Joe Oskiewicz, Ian Stewart, Mike Wilkinson and Bob Hine attended the annual Ripley Morris Ale Feast at Ripley Church Hall. There were beers and cow pie for all, except those 'who do not condone the ritual slaughter of innocent animals'. A vegetarian option was almost reluctantly provided. It would almost certainly be a riotous beer soaked event with beer chasers for the willing participants.

One week later on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> February 1989 Dolphin were at the annual Leicester Morris Feast at Markfield an altogether more genteel occasion, with meat provided by Wocko from his country pile at Knebworth.

A Squires letter from Joe Oskiewicz to John Sweeney and presumably to other members was soliciting attendance at practice. Joe pointed out that refinements and evolving 'select' dances required practice to consolidate them. Joe also mentioned the '*current spate of injuries*' in the side and so had arranged for Sandra (Penny Porpoise) to attend a practice on February 16<sup>th</sup> 1989 to discuss style, presentation and warming up. Joe mentioned that athletes and pro dancers use warm up in their training. Sandra is a classically trained ballet dancer and teacher, but according to Joe, '*tu-tu's are not obligatory*'. Nothing is noted so it appears that no one turned up in one.

Joe goes further and mentioned the new handkerchiefs that were 'moderately subsidised', ready for use at practice. Quoting William Kimber's famous, '*The crowning glory of a Morris Man is his hat*', Joe asked for more care to be taken in the adornment of hats and asked for the removal of all badges, stickers and tickets. These were to be replaced with '*ribbons in Dolphin colours and flowers of the season*'. Ribbons would be provided from the bag and flowers by the individual. Joe made an exception to Chris D[euchar] '*who hasn't got a garden*'. [No mention is made as to how Chris would procure flowers?]

Joe then turned his attention to bell pads and arranged '*another bell pad inspection*' for Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February and requested that '*ribbons in Dolphin colours are seen on them*'. Joe finished with praise for the successful fund raising ceilidh held in June 1988 (of which no details are known) and will organise another for 1989 (of which no details are known either!)



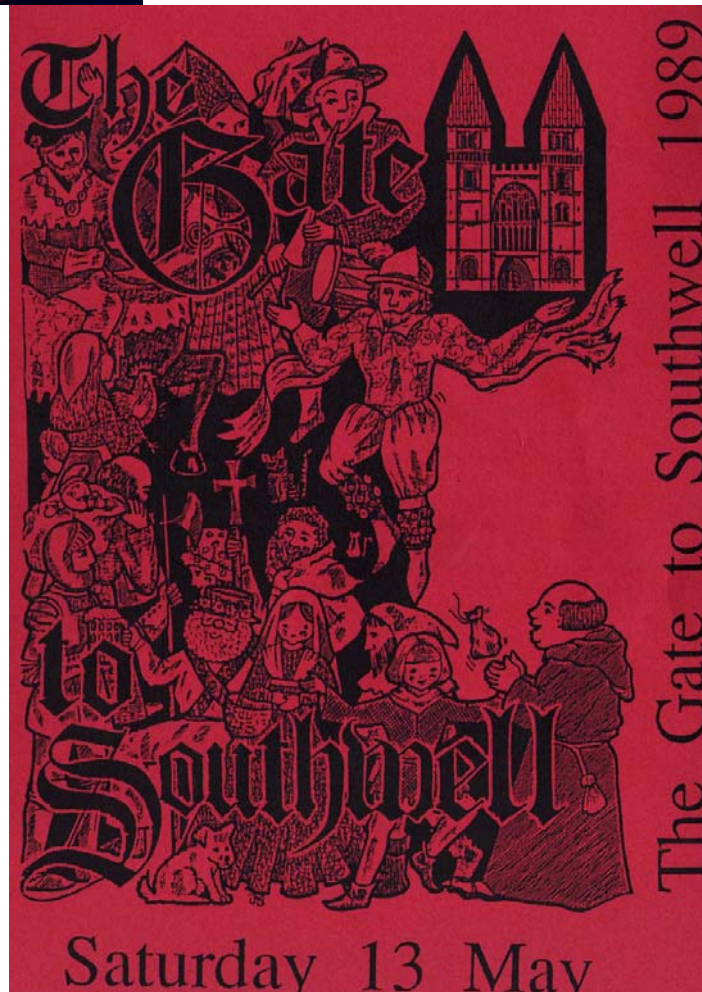
1989 was the year of the ninth Gate to Southwell and sides present on May 13<sup>th</sup> were; Dolphin Morris Men, Broadstone Morris Men, Foresters Morris Men, Aidleys Morris, Calverton Morris Men, Clifton Grove Morris Men, Black Pig Border, Nottingham Pride Clog, Leen Valley Morris, Micklebarrow Morris Men, Sergeant Musgrave's Dance.





Left: *The 1989 souvenir Gate badge with a design by Mike Scott.*

Below: *Souvenir programme cover design*



Above: *The Southwell Pence being handed to the Chapter Clerk at the Minster*

A full season of twelve Thursday night pub tours took place in 1989 for which there are no photographs or information except the AGM accounts sheet which shows that a total of £246 was raised from ‘bottling’ the public. That equates to approximately 30

pubs at £8.40p each. At least one tour was done jointly with each of Sergeant Musgrave's, Maids of Clifton, and Aidleys Morris.

Thaxted was on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1989 and the side were once more on tour but the lack of a programme in the scrapbook means that there is no information about dance spots or the teams danced with. Unusually there are lots of photographs mainly of Dolphin, so no clues there.



*Above: Mike struggles to dance with a bad back, but the hook legs were excellent*



*Above: Nick Murphy akimbo, Steve Daniels a smokin', Simon Haydock aloft*



*Above: Mike has a rest*



The 229<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Morris Ring was organised by Dolphin Morris from June 24<sup>th</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> 1989. Nick Murphy acted as Bagman and main organiser of the event.

**THIS RING MEETING . . .**  
is a national gathering of Morris Dancers. The event is so called because it is held under the auspices of **THE MORRIS RING**, the national organisation of skilled Morris Dancers. The Morris Ring was founded in 1934, and this weekend marks its 229th Meeting.

**OUR THANKS . . .**  
The Dolphin Morris Men, on behalf of the Morris Ring, acknowledge the generous financial help given to this Ring Meeting by: Nottingham City Council; Nottinghamshire County Council; Rushcliffe Borough Council; Messrs Home Ales; Messrs Shipstone's. We also thank: John Garner for providing catering equipment; and the Rev. David Swain, Rector of Bingham, for assistance in arranging events at Bingham.

**MORRIS DANCING**  
By custom, Morris Dancing is done by men only. It usually calls for a 'side' of six men, though sometimes the dance is done by eight or more. Often the dancers flourish handkerchiefs or clash sticks or swords.

The origins of Morris Dancing are, literally, lost in antiquity. No-one knows for sure how old this style of dancing is, where it came from, nor what its original purposes were. We do know that Morris Dancing was already regarded as an ancient custom in the time of Shakespeare. Woodcuts from that period show a costume and style of dancing that would not look out of place in a present-day Morris show.

From the Industrial Revolution onwards, social changes have threatened the continued existence of the Morris. In particular, the First World War brought disruption to many traditional communities where the Morris was danced. Luckily, by the work of various collectors -- notably Cecil Sharp -- knowledge of the Morris was recorded and its performance was revived. There are still some villages in England where the tradition of the Morris has continued unbroken, but most Morris Dancers today belong to Morris clubs that have revived the practice of the dances. The clubs you will see dancing at the Ring Meeting perform mainly dances collected from the Cotswold area, together with some from Northern England and the Welsh Border country.

**the MORRIS RING**  
founded 1934

# MORRIS DANCING

## 24 - 25 June

229th MEETING of the MORRIS RING

Host Club: NOTTINGHAM DOLPHIN MORRIS MEN  
Squire of the Morris Ring: MIKE GARLAND

Roy Harris in his Nottingham Evening Post 'FOLK BEAT' column had this to say, 'Nottingham is resounding to the jingling of bells and the clashing of sticks this weekend with the Morris Ring in town...The Morris Ring, formed in 1934, is a national organisation of dancers, holding gatherings known as 'Rings' in different members' towns. It's an honour and a responsibility to host a Ring meeting and the Dolphin Morris Men of Nottingham are justly proud that this 229<sup>th</sup> meeting is in their charge'.

Eleven teams attended including Dolphin and on the Saturday they split into three groups and each toured and danced at venues in the City and County.



Above: John Whitelaw and Roy Dyson sit like coiled springs waiting for the deluge of men arriving for the Ring Meeting. 'Another glass won't do any harm', said John. 'Wha..what was that?' said Roy, falling off his chair.



Left: Nick Murphy and Chris Gigg get a quick pint in before the serious drinking begins.

Right: Ian Ambrose puts the finishing touches to a masterpiece while referring to his first edition copy of 'Cooking with Fanny' [Craddock] Ian can be seen here with his 'Breakfast Casserole Surprise' in full swing.



At the Saturday night feast the men's hunger was satisfied with:

Melon and Herb Pâté with Garlic Bread

\*

Paprika Beef with New Potatoes and  
Mange-Tout with Pepper and Ginger

\*

Summer Pudding with Cream

\*

Cheese and Biscuits

\*

Coffee and Mints

\*

Beer by Hoskins Brewery

The log entry of the Morris Ring reads:

*The 229<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Morris Ring was held in Nottingham from 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> June 1989 and was organised by the DMM who were celebrating their 21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary. The weekend was a camping weekend; the campsite was at the National Rowing Centre at Holme Pierrepont; it was not exclusive to the Morris Men. The Squire and Bagman of the Ring had the luxury of a caravan which was parked in the grounds of a nearby house. The weather remained fine throughout the weekend and it was particularly hot on Sunday. The following clubs attended for the whole weekend; Aldham, Alton, Belchamp St Paul, Long Man, Mount Bures, North Wood, Swaledale. Foresters, Leicester, and Phoenix Sword attended on Saturday only.*



On Friday evening a barbeque was held at the Rowing Club HQ, and breakfasts on Saturday and Sunday were provided by caterers at the Rowing Club.



On Saturday morning the men set out in three coaches for a massed display in Old Market Square Nottingham at 10.15am in the presence of the Lord Mayor and the Sheriff of Nottingham. Dolphin danced Trunkles from Sherborne. The show ended at 11.15am and the men went on three tours.

Tour A: 11.45 West Leake 12.30 Kegworth **1.15 Normanton** 3.45 Wollaton Hall

Tour B: **11.30 Trip to Jerusalem** 1.00 Wysall 2.00 Wymeswold 4.00 West Bridgford

Tour C: 11.25 Sneinton 12.30 Stoke Bardolph 1.30 Fiskerton **3.20**

**Southwell Minster**

(**Bold** denotes a visit by the Squire and Bagman of the Ring)

Tours met up again at Keyworth Village Hall for the feast at 7.30pm. In fact the feast was delayed as it was being cooked by some of the DMM

and they took longer than expected. The delay allowed the men to spend more time at the local hostelryes.

The meal started about twenty minutes late. Sam Taylor spoke the Selkirk Grace.



(After the meal) The Squire proposed the Loyal Toast and the Immortal Memory. Charlie Corcoran of Leicester MM proposed the toast to DMM, and Joe (Oskiewicz) thanked all the men for coming to celebrate Dolphin's 21<sup>st</sup> birthday and he asked DMM to drink the health of the guests.

[Ring Membership] Staves were presented to Aldham MM and Belchamp St Pauls. Mike Garland expressed a word of thanks to the cooks of Dolphin for an excellent and different meal. [Different – was that a compliment?]

Post meal songs included: Aldham-The Kerry Recruit, Belchamp St Paul- There was an old woman who lived over the hill, Long Man- Sweeney Todd the Barber, Swaledale- Lowlands Away, Dolphin- The famous Shipstone's Brew!

*After the feast the men dispersed to various public houses in Keyworth to continue the dancing and singing. At closing time the men were taken back to the campsite by coach.*

*On Sunday after packing up tents the men travelled to the Church Service at Bingham Parish Church at 11.15am. During the service DMM danced 'The Orange in Bloom' from Sherborne.*



*Once the service was over the men processed to Bingham Market Place for a massed display. The procession was led by [the Ring] Squire and Bagman and the Vicar. Mike Wilkinson danced a jig in the display for Dolphin.*



*Left: Mike Wilkinson dancing his mouthorgan jig for the crowds*

*Below:*

*Left; Belchamp St Paul MM*

*Right; Alton MM*





*A very good crowd had gathered and the sun shone brightly. After the massed display the men went to local inns and then to a cold buffet prepared by DMM at the Church Hall, Bingham.*

Belchamp St Paul in their scrapbook write-up said;

*'Our first ever Ring Meeting was held in glorious weather in Nottingham...*

*The show dance on the Saturday morning was in the city centre in front of the Lord Mayor and Sheriff of Nottingham...As at Thaxted the lads turned in a beautiful performance of "Willow Tree" from Bucknell...*

*The rest of the day went well and was notable mainly for a staggeringly brutal Upton upon Severn stick dance by Northwood MM. This involved (a) chorus that nearly castrated their Squire.*

*The feast in the evening was a splendid affair, but an attack of the nerves forced our Squire to cut his song short by two verses (for which he was greatly berated afterwards). Fortunately we were entertained by an amazing rendition of Sweeney Todd the Barber by the Long Man MM fool.*

*After the meal we repaired to the village for ale, but sadly we missed what must have been the high point of the weekend: The Squire and Bagman of the Ring being barred from a pub!*

*With the exception of Mick...our slumbers were greatly disturbed by certain of the Mount Bures MM who conducted a jig instructional all night long in full kit, including bells!*

*Sunday was a much lower key affair with many sides drifting away quite early...Nevertheless it proved to be a memorable weekend for the Belchamp MM'.*

Joe's Squire's report at the AGM states, *'The Ring meet was of course the highlight of our year – an extremely successful weekend. It was pleasing to see a few of the old Dolphin's taking part. Thanks to Roy, Wib and Chris. It was also doubly pleasing to see all the Dolphin die-hards do their bit, many thanks to Nick and all the Dolphins for making the weekend an unqualified success. All the planning and hard work over the past two years certainly came to fruition'.*

Ian Stewart's foreman's report stated, *'Once again this past season, we maintained a standard of performance that puts us among the top dozen or so clubs in the country. This was noticeable in particular at our two Ring Meeting appearances namely Thaxted and our own Ring Meeting. Congratulations to all who danced so well there. We gained the usual compliments from 'those who know'.*

John Whitelaw recalls, *'At the 1989 Dolphin Ring Meeting at Keyworth I helped with the catering (150 individual summer puddings) and decided to perform my final Bonny Green Garters at the Sunday lunch session. On my way I was accosted by a woman who insisted on keeping me talking about dancing. I arrived just in time for the final, 'Oi!'*

Just one month after the Ring Meeting Dolphin organised another weekend of dancing, this time in Derbyshire with guest teams Aidleys Morris and Nottingham Pride Clog. From photographs it was clearly sunny and hot on the weekend of July 15th and 16<sup>th</sup> 1989. A letter from Stella Lane of Aidleys states,

*Dear Simon,*

*I'm writing on behalf of Aidleys Morris Dancers to say what a lovely weekend we all had on July 16<sup>th</sup> in Derbyshire.*

*Those who camped; liked the campsite, enjoyed the social atmosphere in the evenings, and appreciated the chance of getting to know people from other groups. Those like myself who could only come for the day felt you'd chosen a pleasant situation...a one hour drive from Nottingham.*

*We all enjoyed the ploughman's lunch at Alstonefield and the ice-cream at Hartington.*

*Another pleasant feature of the day was that anyone who came, who was not a dancer or musician, also felt very welcome...'*

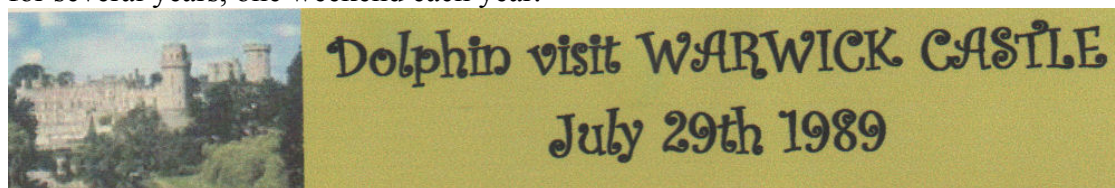


Left and below;  
*Various photographs  
from the weekend  
show the campsite  
And the men dancing  
in the glorious  
sunshine*





Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> July 1989 and Dolphin were at Warwick Castle for the day. The organisers of the Warwick Castle days was the West Midlands Folk Federation. Their brief was to have teams arranged during summer weekends and Dolphin danced there for several years, one weekend each year.



Lots of photos were taken:



*Above: Mike flowers his hat and the boys strike a classic pose!*



*Above: Mike realises too late that Joe had 'gone' in his mug...*





Above: Paul Geissler and right, Dave Walters tries to get out of shot and Mike is rattled



Above left: Ian Ambrose with his broken hand (still bandaged) from Derbyshire  
Above middle: Ian Stewart running for the loo Above right: A floral Mike



Left: Logo of West Midlands Folk Federation

A letter of thanks for our performance and a cheque for £50 was received. This was the last time that Dolphin danced at Warwick after a decision taken at the AGM. Basically Dolphin didn't make much money from the collection, and had to share that with the Lichfield MM who didn't even wear bell pads!

Dave Walters recalls, 'Lichfield Morris Men were double booked with us – both teams thought they were the only ones supposed to be there. John Sweeney tried to show them how to dance Lichfield!'

At the AGM on September 21<sup>st</sup> 1989 Ian Ambrose took over as Squire, Nick Murphy, Deputy Squire, and Simon Haydock remained as Bagman while Mike Wilkinson retained the job of keeper of the scrapbook. Mike also asked that the job of fooling be recognised as a *'proper'* job.

Joe proposed the use of fezzes as the new headgear, and although he tried to withdraw the motion it was approved by those present!

Joe's Squire's report as well as praising the Ring Meeting, points out that the long hot summer contributed to all the events and made a pleasant change to previous wet years. He did however have a 'go' at the side's presentation mentioning the lack of dancers at the point of going on to dance – in the bar or the loo or late arriving. He went on to say, *'When finally this fine band of peripatetic terpsichorean artisans shamble on to demonstrate the ancient art of Cotswold Morris, the performance is marred by an excess of high spirits and shouting'*, which he felt was very un-Morris like. Joe did go on to concede that, *'When the occasion presents itself...the professionalism inherent in Dolphin shines through'*.

In a letter dated 1<sup>st</sup> November Ian Ambrose wrote of his hopes and expectations. He hoped that regular attendance at practice would stop the occasional turn out at events to *'muck in'* as this was more likely to *'muck up'* the dancing standard. He indicated that Mike Wilkinson had ideas to start a regular newsletter which he hoped would get the support of the members.

As good as his word Mike produced a single page newsletter, *'Issue one: Nov89'*. It was produced for the practice on 16<sup>th</sup> November and came with a Squire's *'rude letter'* which among other things mentioned poor attendance at practices.

The foreman asked for attention to be paid to stance and position in the set, and the bagman asked for a good turnout at the forthcoming Mumpers booking. Mike and Wocko had recently been to the funeral of Morris Sunderland to represent Dolphin MM. Mike informed the readers that the *'new beast to replace the Dolphin is nearing completion'*, and asked for a volunteer to be the keeper of the beast.

November 19<sup>th</sup> 1989 and Dolphin were performing at *'Mumpers Ceilidh Club'* in Derby. Nick Murphy's band *'Cloggit, Scratchit and Bellows'* were booked and Dolphin did a set of dances during the break. Issue two of the new newsletter for *'Dec 89'* states, *'We put on an entertaining show and the audience reaction was good'*. The downside was that Dolphin struggled for numbers and the standard suffered because of it. Ted Hutchby who was calling for the band joined in with Dolphin's set to bolster numbers.

During 1989 no new members are recorded but Martin Morley re-joined after a break of several years. At the instigation of Mike Wilkinson Dolphin joined the *'International Dolphin Watch'* an idea that seemed good at the time but would later be reviewed and revoked due to the internal politics of the organisation.



## CHAPTER TWENTY THREE

1990 – Dolphin and partners go out for a Chinese and The Gate is 10 years old

1990 starts with the new newsletter already two issues to the good and the promise of a busy year ahead.

First item on the calendar was the Annual Ripley Morris Ale Feast on 27<sup>th</sup> January 1990 and held as usual at Ripley Church Hall, Moseley Street. The newsletter had this to say about it, *'Ripley Feast was the usual enjoyable but enormous gathering. The side was quite well represented'*. In the December 1989 newsletter when the event was plugged Mike had stated, *'Judging by last year, you won't go home thirsty'*. Presumably no one did

Mike Wilkinson (who says that he doesn't organise anything) organised a Friday night out for Dolphin staff and partners at a Chinese restaurant near Trent Bridge. The newsletter reports, *'The Chinese meal finally happened on 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb [1990]. It was an enjoyable evening. Thanks to all who came...I'm sure we'll have another'* [It would be 14<sup>th</sup> June 2005 and it was to be an Indian meal]



It was a busy weekend, for the next day (3rd February) Bert Cleaver was driving down to give a Sherborne instructional for Dolphin and in the evening it would be a short drive to the Miner's Institute at Markfield for the Annual Leicester Feast, which promised, *'our usual mix of fine home cooked food and locally brewed Hoskin's bitter along with a chance to chat, sing and dance, mainly informally'*.

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> February 1990 and Mike Wilkinson went along to a presentation by Dr Dobbs, the founder of 'International Dolphin Watch', the organisation that Dolphin Morris Men had subscribed to only the year before. Mike formed the opinion that it was a vehicle to promote Dr Dobbs, to fund his diving holidays, and push his various books. Mike decided that we should no longer be associated with it so no fancy sweatshirts for the Dolphin Morris Men.

Saturday April 28<sup>th</sup> 1990 and Dolphin held a fund raising ceilidh at Wollaton Village Hall. Over £500 went into the coffers after outgoings, and the event was considered a roaring success. The band was 'Cloggitt, Scratchit and Bellows' plus others from Dolphin and the evening, 'went with a swing'. There were ex-Dolphin's, 'sleeping' Dolphins and active Dolphins all doing their bit plus the various wives and loved-ones who also gave of their all.



The first weekend in June 1990 and Dolphin were at Thaxted. On Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June Tour F comprised, Dolphin MM, Richmondshire Street House, Standon MM, and Vancouver MM. The tour visited; 10.00am The King's Head at Stebbing 11.00am The Onley Arms, Stisted, 12.00pm The Chapel Arms, Coggeshall 2.30pm Falcon Square, Castle Hedingham 3.34pm Guildhall, Thaxted.

Graham Baldwin of Vancouver Morris Men posted the following on the VMM web site, *'For the tour on the Saturday we were with Dolphin MM, Richmondshire Street House MM, and Standon MM – all Cotswold sides. The Vancouver MM were joined by John Dibden of Martlett Morris and Sword – John had danced with VMM in 1986 while on vacation in Canada. We all had a great time dancing around the picturesque*

*Essex villages, culminating in a set outside the Guildhall in Thaxted itself. We were all impressed with the dancing of our colleagues, particularly Dolphin MM's Sherborne, Standon MM's Ducklington and Richmondshire Street House MM's Bidford'.*

The newsletter had this to say, *'Thaxted was probably the best we've attended, with a superb tour and show followed by a gigantic Indian meal organised by Bert. We now need a grant to go and teach Vancouver Morris men how to dance Ilmington'.*

As usual Bob Hine had his caravan at Sibley's Green and provided breakfasts and coffee for the Dolphin waifs and strays, and is always a welcome stop in that gap that appears late afternoon especially when you don't book in for tea and stickies at the school.



The next major event of the year was the Gate to Southwell on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> June. 1990 was the 10<sup>th</sup> since the revival began in 1981 and proved to be the wettest so far. Over the ten years most dancing teams in and around Nottingham had taken part and this was acknowledged in the programme with a list of teams and their first year of participation in the procession:

**1981** – Dolphin, Foresters, Micklebarrow, Clifton Grove

**1982** – Broadstone

**1983** – No new teams attended

**1984** – Selston, University Morris, Calverton

**1985** – Aidleys (danced at NSPCC Fayre in 1984) Greenwood Clog (danced at spots)

**1986** – Sgt Musgrave's Dance (danced at spots in 1985) Leen Valley Morris

**1987** – No new teams attended

**1988** – Black Pig border

**1989** – Nottingham Pride Clog

**1990** – Maids of Clifton, Ripley Morris, Ripley Green Garters, Portland Poklers, Huddersfield Guisers, University Clog

Above: *Programme cover*

Right: *souvenir Gate badge with design by Mick Scott*



To celebrate 10 years of 'Gates' a presentation was made to Bob Hine who first discovered the reference in old documents, and his wife Anne. Ian Ambrose in his Squire's AGM report refers to 'a tremendous response to the presentation to Bob and Anne'.

Mike in his newsletter write-up says, *'The Gate by contrast (to Thaxted) must have been the wettest so far, but the atmosphere and sense of occasion were all they should have been for the 10<sup>th</sup>...special thanks to Bob for organising the Gate, Roy for organising the dancing displays, Joe for organising and driving the minibus and Mike Garland for turning up and to everyone for their generosity in giving Bob and Anne such a pleasant surprise with the gift and signed card'.*

Still in June 1990 Dolphin organised another Derbyshire camping weekend and were joined by Aidleys Morris and Sgt Musgrave's Dance. The newsletter as usual had much to say about the weekend, *'22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> June. Derbyshire weekend with Aidleys and Musgrave's. An enjoyable weekend. I only made it for the Saturday. I am told that*



*the barbeque was good. I refrained from breaking Ian's hand in Upton so he got his hot dog this year!' There were photographs of the occasion:*

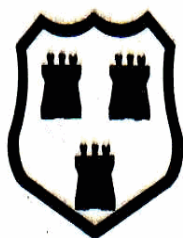


*Above: Admiring glances for Aidleys high kicks while the men of Dolphin look on to see which ones are wearing suspenders!*



*Above: It was neck and neck in the 'balancing on one leg' event and because only Dolphins entered no prize was actually awarded. Joe appeared to have the correct technique.*

## **NEWCASTLE MORRIS MEN**



To celebrate the diamond jubilee of the Newcastle Morris Men in 1990 a weekend of dance was organised for July 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> and Dolphin were invited.

Eight Dolphin's went along and photographs suggest that they included; Nick Murphy, Joe Oskiewicz, Ian Stewart, Mike Wilkinson, John Sweeney, Ian Ambrose, Dave Walters, and Bob Hine.

The itinerary for Saturday included dancing in Newcastle, Durham, Chester-Le-Street, Beamish, South Shields, and Washington but *'not necessarily in that order'*.





On the Sunday dancing was at the Gateshead Garden Festival...



The weekend was centred on Gosforth Park Racecourse complex with indoor camping.



The roving reporter writes in the newsletter, *'A fantastic weekend notable for its relaxed atmosphere and unobtrusive organisation. I've never seen so many people asleep on a bus before. We danced at Beamish Industrial Museum (free ride on a tram) and Gateshead Garden Festival (Hmmm). We were entertained by Swedish fiddle duets. Best of all there was a really good turnout of Dolphins. It was the sort of event that really brings us together as a side. Nice to see Dolphins who don't often go away for weekends'*.

Dave Walters recalls that it was his first Ring Meeting after five years with the side and his first time in the north east. Dave remembers going to Beamish and that it rained so they had a tram and a train ride, looked round the exhibits and shops but did little or no dancing. Headington Quarry Morris Men were there and were *'stand-offish'*. Joe spent some time reading a *'raunchy'* book and came across the word *'burgeoning'* which he used at every opportunity during the weekend, as did all the others in the side. Banchory Morris Men were also at the event with a fool who wore a Tam o' Shanter and had a Border Collie which he used in his *'act'*.

Ian Ambrose in his AGM report makes mention. *'Newcastle was very enjoyable as a side event, shame about the weather and the food!'*

July 22<sup>nd</sup> 1990 at The Beehive, Mapleback, and Rufford Park for *'Aidleys picnic'*. The newsletter says, *'Thanks to Aidleys for inviting us out for the day. A nice stop at the Beehive, Mapleback, followed by an hour's show at Rufford Park. More food than even Dolphin could eat and millions of wasps flown in specially.'*

*Having wasps at a picnic is as old as the Morris. A document dated 1109 refers to Morris men who were 'dryninge ale at all tymes' when theye were attacked by a swarm of wasps. Although theye tried to ward them off by waving sticks and hankies, theye were forced to flee and run twenty miles from Nottingham to Southwell before they escaped. The document refers to a certain Eduarde Hotchbye, being so beset about with wasps that he did throw himselfe into the Trente and daunced him about like a madman.* The original document appears to have been lost but the above is Mike's recollection as far as he can remember, he would freely admit, were he to be asked, that some of it might be made up, but only if he were asked.

With the annual August break imminent the A.G.M. on September 20<sup>th</sup> 1990 was the next major obstacle to be negotiated. Fourteen Dolphins' were there to witness events as they unfolded, each armed with spanners to throw in any works that might have required it. Officers were Ian Ambrose (Squire for a second year), Nick Murphy for Deputy Squire, Steve Daniels became Bagman and Mike retained the Keeper of the Scrapbook. Simon Haydock proposed that subs remained at £10 per man and this was accepted.

Mike proposed that because fezzes had not actually been taken into general usage the team should adopt the sombrero as a hat not to wear for the next season. Squire Ian Ambrose put a block on kit discussions so fezzes remained on the Dolphin statute books.

September 26<sup>th</sup> 1990 and Dolphin went to Ilmington, to learn Ilmington from the Ilmington Morris Men. A report in the newsletter described the day as, *'John (Sweeney) led a group of five of us to Ilmington to join in a practice with the original and genuine Ilmington Morris Men. It was an enjoyable and instructive evening. Our style is recognisably similar to theirs but there are distinctive features which differ. For example, we will probably adopt the shape of their hey. Socially the evening was*

*a success and there was a general feeling that we should get together with them again. It was gratifying to have a good turn out at short notice for this event'. [No such get-together occurred again]*



Another short notice event caused, *'a small but noisy contingent'* of Dolphins to go to the King's Head in Sutton Bonington on Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> September 1990. The landlady was having a leaving party. Dolphin danced one jig and played some music. *'It was a pleasant evening and it was nice to be invited...and we got fed'*.

Practices were getting reasonable attendances, at least better than twelve months before, and things were looking up. The newsletter had been a success being a combination of event reporting, event notification and reminding, but mainly a vehicle for reinforcing what was trying to be taught at practice, in a read it at home sort of format.

November 1990 proved to be a busy month with the Man Friday Feast at Thrussington on 17<sup>th</sup> and then on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Dolphin attended the Old Market Square for the Children in Need Appeal. The newsletter tells us that, *'There was a good turnout, and it was enjoyable for everyone. I'm (Squire) grateful to the side for rallying round at such short notice'*. The Squire didn't actually say the above words but had he been in when Mike phoned he would have.

Practices finished on December 20<sup>th</sup> 1990, after a visit to The Station for a final pint and a Merry Christmas all round.

### **1990 Tours and what the editor of the newsletter had to say about them.**

**May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Bull & Swan, Diseworth; Plough, Diseworth; Three Horseshoes, Hemington.** *'A good tour with a fair sized audience at all three pubs. We didn't get round to inviting Man Friday in time but it was probably just as well as we ended up dancing in the dark at the last pub'*.

**May 10<sup>th</sup>. Wymeswold; the Windmill, White Horse, Three Crowns.** *'Well attended tour, with a small audience at the Windmill, and a good music session at the White Horse. Their resident accordionist entertained us, and there was a great atmosphere. A lone youth advised us against adopting a high profile at the Three Crowns (allegedly degenerate clientele) but we danced opposite the pub to an audience of none'*.

**May 17<sup>th</sup>. Old Folks bungalows and the Plough, Sutton Bonington and the Plough, Normanton.** *'Once again our visit to the old folk's bungalows coincided with an old folks outing, so there was only a small, but appreciative audience. There was minimal interest from the regulars at the Plough, SB and there was the usual great welcome from the landlady at the Plough, Normanton. We are welcome there without appointment, any time we choose, and there is a suggestion that we make this our after practice regular. Highlight of the tour was watching Nick trying to play the pipe and tabor as a tame mallard nibbled the cuffs of his trousers. He failed. The duck later bit Ian Stewart's finger. Ian hates picking up bills!'*

**May 24<sup>th</sup>. Bradmore Village; the Plough, Wysall; Generous Briton, Costock.** *'Bradmore village, a pleasant setting, but less audience than usual. The Plough Wysall, always a favourite stop and once again no disappointment. Generous Briton,*



*a group of youths surprised us by being interested, and they actually joined in on Bonny Green. The whole tour was enriched by the presence of the **Maids of Clifton** who are a friendly bunch and good dancers’.*

**May 31<sup>st</sup>. Cap & Stocking, Kegworth; The Star, West Leake; The Kings Head, Sutton Bonington.** *‘Cap & Stocking, this stop has improved immeasurably since the garden at the back was opened. A small but friendly audience. Star, West Leake, the lads from the previous week turned up and joined in. Kings Head SB, they followed us and joined in again, as did another intrepid member of the audience. A good tour ending at our after practice pub’.*

**June 7<sup>th</sup>. Chequers, Stanton by Dale; Carpenters Arms; Dale Abbey; Punch Bowl, West Hallam.** *‘Chequers, a lovely pub, a big audience and free beer. Carpenters Arms, A small and tolerant audience. Could have been good, but we disgraced ourselves with some bad dancing. Typical post Thaxted syndrome. Punch Bowl, a nice place to dance, and we were welcome inside. Small audience but it had started to rain. This was a new tour but it showed plenty of potential’.*

**June 14<sup>th</sup>. Old Swan, Worthington; Holly Bush, Breedon on the Hill; Saracens Head, Smisby.** *‘Old Swan, nice pub, pity we have to dance in the road. All those who got there past the A42 construction and the no-existent signs can have their Boy Scouts Navigator’s pennant. Holly Bush, a great pub, a good welcome, and two mature ladies joined in on Bonny Green and did very well. This pub is a favourite for me. Saracen’s Head, unfortunately our tour clashed with the pink furry dice club of Great Britain. Our dancing outside was received with undisguised antipathy. We went in and danced indoors and the atmosphere was quite the reverse. It all ended well which is what matters. A good tour.*

**June 21<sup>st</sup>.** *was to be a tour with Aidleys at Normanton on Soar and Keyworth but in the event, though midsummer’s day, it was cancelled due to inclement weather.*

**June 28<sup>th</sup>. Hoskins Wharf, Shardlow; Navigation, Trent Lock.** *‘Joint tour with Sgt Musgrave’s, two enjoyable stops, small but friendly audiences’.*

**July 5<sup>th</sup>. The Ship, Lowdham; the Black horse, Caythorpe; Marquis of Granby, Hoveringham.** *‘Joint tour with Aidleys. I missed the first stop; I heard that the turnout was low. The Black Horse is a lovely pub but the car park is not a good place to dance. The Marquis was the best stop of the tour with a small but appreciative audience, including the kitchen staff’.*

**July 12<sup>th</sup>. Bingham two pubs not named!** *‘A return was inevitable following the rapturous reception on the Ring Meeting (1989), unfortunately Bingham on a Thursday appears to be the undisputed territory of the lager lout. Dancing in the Square we attracted a small audience of kids who quite enjoyed it. The first pub (I can’t remember the name) was notable for the audience interaction with two amiable drunks. Hmmm. The last stop was better, with a young audience which started off hostile or indifferent but ended up mildly appreciative’.*

**July 19<sup>th</sup>. Horse & Jockey, Selston; Shepherd’s Rest and Red Lion, Bagthorpe.** *‘Due to circumstances beyond my comprehension we ended up dancing at Bagthorpe with Ripley, Calverton and Nottingham Pride. We had nine dancers and no musician. A really good evening with three nice pubs. I split my trousers at the Shepherd’s Rest and the safety pin repair came undone during a dance at the Red Lion...or is that “Red Loin?”*

**July 26<sup>th</sup>. Market Place, Cromford; King’s Head, Bonsall; Crown, Wensley.** *The newsletter makes no mention of this tour at all.*

## CHAPTER TWENTY FOUR

1991- Dolphin has a 'wretched boy' and also appears on the cover of 'Folk On'

In 1991 early signs showed that practices were not going well, poor or late attendance meant that Fieldtown was not receiving the attention that it needed and with Sherborne being put on the back burner neither would be ready for a season of use (or so it was indicated by the March issue of the newsletter). At the AGM later in the year Ian Ambrose in his Squire's report thought that the practice season had been good but the dancing out season was disappointing. Ian put some of it down to the absence of several key members at material times and an apathy that seemed to creep in to the side. Ian Stewart continued to be upbeat in his Foreman's report with his, *'We maintained the high standard of performance for which we have become known'*. Ian had been accused of cheerleading in previous years and had agreed with the comment but backed it up with his positive take on all things. All was not gloom and doom though, and much was achieved including a full Thursday night tour programme.

Ripley organised the yearly get together at their Ale Feast on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1991 and it is presumed that it was the usual well attended frenzy of drink and food crazed Morris, music and mirth. We may never know as the January and February issues of the newsletter didn't arrive because the editor had 'other things to do'. The March issue didn't even mention the Dolphin ceilidh that should have gone ahead on March 2<sup>nd</sup> but the balance sheet presented at the AGM shows a healthy £361.25p of income so it can't have been a bad 'do'.



The first report of the year concerned the annual Feast

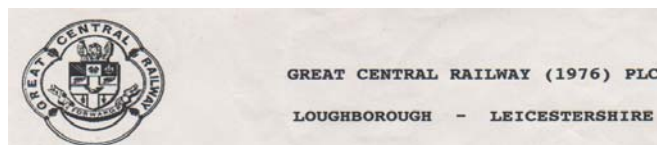
**FORESTERS MORRIS MEN**  
Annual Feast

organised by the Foresters Morris Men which took place on March 23<sup>rd</sup> 1991. The write up suggested that there was, *'Quite a good turn out from Dolphin'* and went on to elaborate with, *'and a good time was had by all'*. Twelve sides plus the hosts were there, as well as Mike Garland and Ray King. The thirsty were rewarded with Theakson's XB and Greene King IPA.

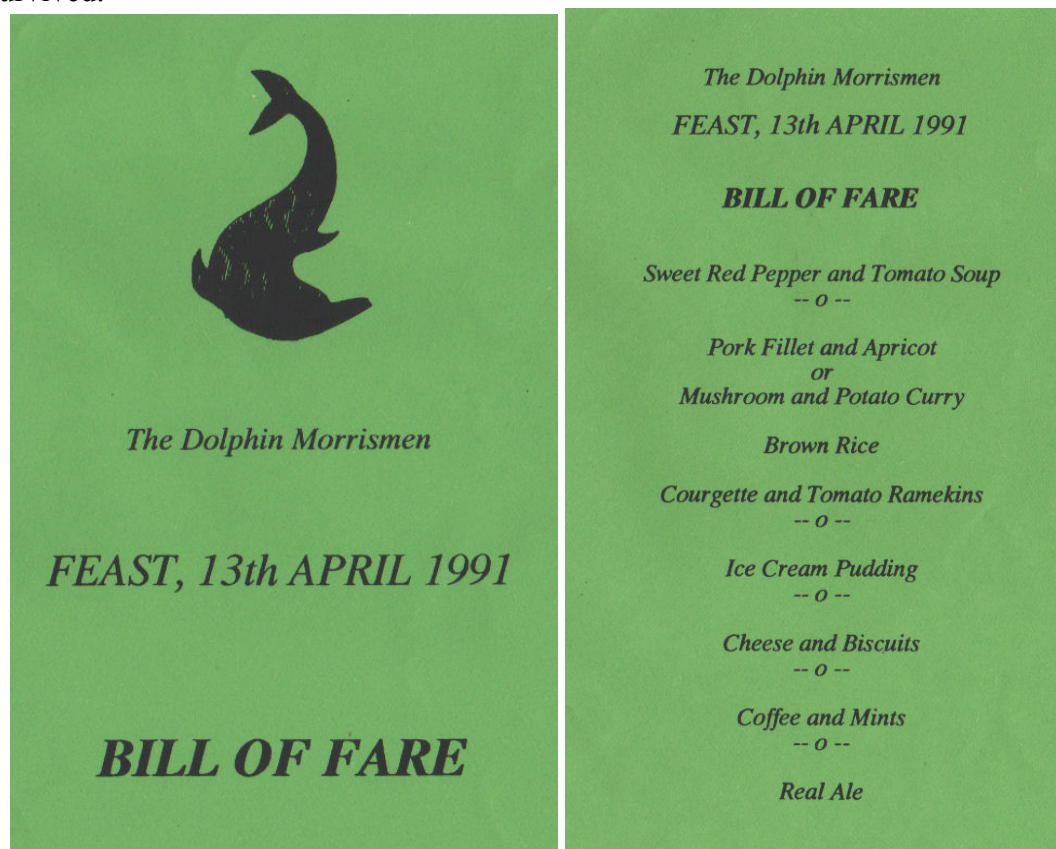
It was late June 1991 before the next newsletter made an appearance. There were brief reports on the seven pub tours that had been and gone. No mention was made about the weekend of dance that occurred between 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> April. In March the plan for that weekend had been to provide supper on the Friday and to dance on the Saturday and Sunday with a feast on Saturday night. There are some clues about the weekend from a few remaining documents. In a short letter from Ian Ambrose dated 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1991 he sends, *'a big thank you to everyone who helped to make the feast such a successful and memorable occasion. The whole weekend can be best summed up by the Greensleeves Squire's comment on returning from the Great Central (Railway)- "What a pity you made us dance at Rothley, it spoiled our enjoyment of the buffet car!" We also received invitations to at least 3 events during the evening...'*

A letter from Great Central Railway (1976) PLC that has been kept in the archive confirms that the men will visit the railway at Loughborough on 13<sup>th</sup> April 1991. It mentions that *'the Station Master will provide a dancing site and that the time of arrival was planned for about 3.00pm.'*

*The men will board a train at 3.35pm before departure to Rothley where a fifteen minute window of opportunity will allow some dancing to take place while the engine turns round’.*



Most teams have a menu but Dolphin had a Bill of Fare, a copy of which has survived:



At the AGM on September 19<sup>th</sup> 1991 Ian Ambrose again makes mention of the weekend;

*‘Our weekend of dance in April, in spite of a select (small!) attendance and a small band of helpers, was a great success and the compliments paid by our guests were a great encouragement.*

*Memories of Greensleeves crashed out on the train, Chris frantically ferrying food to and from the lab deep freeze and playing char lady will remain for a long time... However I hope never to have to both cook the feast and MC the evening together again, it’s far too knacker.*

*Thanks to all who helped for a great effort.’*

The accounts show that the feast made a loss of £206.35p but it is believed that the term ‘feast’ covers the whole weekend and not just the meal.





On May Day 1991 Mike Wilkinson set his alarm and was out with Foresters Morris Men at Nottingham Castle to see the sun up and he even made the local newspaper; Mike can be seen third from the right peeping through the crowd of Foresters Men.



Mike seen here in glorious colour with the dawn painting the sky behind him.

All over the country the loins of the ground would be girded with anticipation, for the spurt in growth that would be promoted because of this pagan Morris madness.

The next major event was Thaxted Ring Meeting on the weekend of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> June 1991. Unusually nothing remains in the side's archive! No one appears to have taken a photograph or kept a programme.

There is a write up in the newsletter, that gives a clue to what it was like;

*'Thaxted was as usual the first weekend in June. Only seven Dolphins made it this year, which was disappointing, but we had a brilliant time. The best Thaxted for a long time. The tour was great with audiences at every stop, even the first one. There were no town centres, just picturesque villages. Rutland Morrismens' fool/announcer kept the show running very tightly, and there was more dancing than I can remember from any other tour.'*



*The evening show in the Main St was a bit ragged compared to previous years, but all good fun. Dolphin put on a good show and received favourable comment. Well done to Phil, returning after quite an absence, and making the difference between a good side and just six of us getting exhausted.*

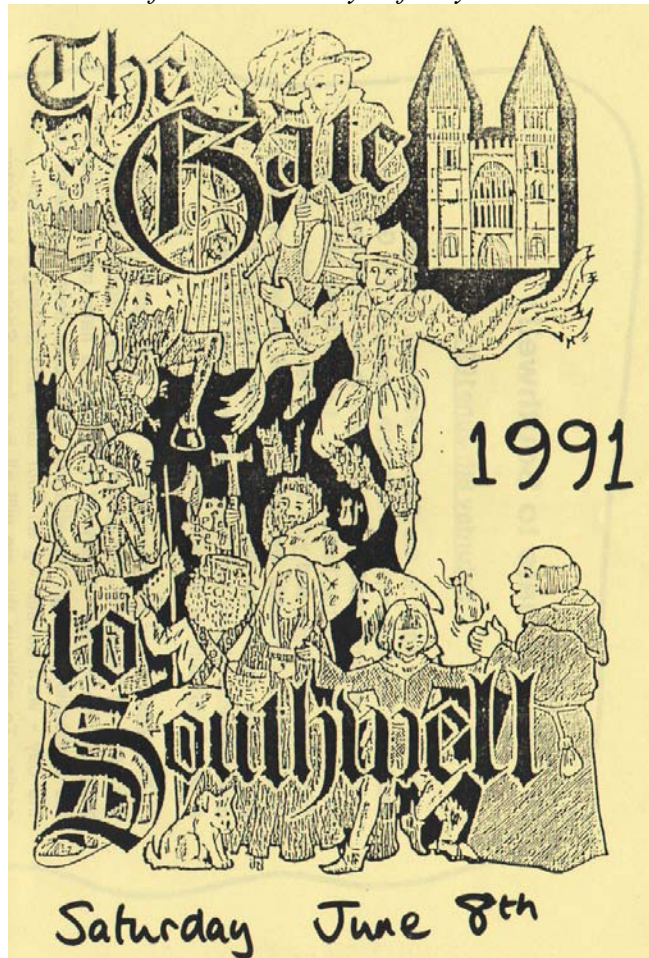
*The only person who let us down was the one who shall remain nameless (Let us call him "wretched Boy") who spent a large part of the day incurring the displeasure of Father Kenneth by playing everything at a "vulgar gallop". How will Dolphin ever live this down? Oh the shame'.*

Ian Ambrose in his 1991 AGM report puts it like this, *'Thaxted this year was most enjoyable and probably the climax of our dancing quality this season, although I think that Father Kenneth would disagree about the music (young upstart musician – BOY!) Thanks to Rutland for providing someone who could both Squire and MC the tour. A fine show dance too. What a shame we got ripped off in the restaurant.'*

Ian Stewart in his foreman's report said, *'Congratulations, all who danced in public during this past summer, especially the Thaxted side – the quality of our dancing was fitting for a memorable Thaxted meeting'*. [Strangely Ian didn't mention the 'wretched boy' or anything about the music!]

The eleventh Gate to Southwell was on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June 1991 and Bob Hine experimented with some changes that would require less time on the least enjoyable sections, and allow more dancers in the procession through the villages. It also meant that the start was an hour later than usual at 9.45am and the finish was also an hour earlier than usual. There was to be more time on the bus: Sneinton to Burton Joyce, Burton Joyce to Lowdham and Fiskerton to Easthorpe in Southwell.

In the programme Bob wrote, *'after last year, the weather can only improve (I hope) – 9 hours of rain in one day is fairly unusual even by English standards!'*



The newsletter had this to say:

*'The Gate went pretty well, although with a smaller turnout than previous years. The format was changed this year, with a lot more use of vans, and a lot less processing. This led to a lot more drinking, but we coped with that.'*

*The Lord Mayor seemed a lot more into the spirit of it than on previous years. Sneinton Environmental Society greeted us with the usual proclamation, which is always a highlight of the day. It's great that people outside the Morris community should commit themselves so enthusiastically to the Gate. My slapstick broke in the Minster porch. It must be God's judgement on me for not believing in him'.*



Ian Ambrose at the AGM wrote, *'I must give Bob high praise for trying something different with the Gate this year. It's a shame it didn't come off completely.'*





Above: Dolphin on the cover of *FOLK ON* edited by, among others, Roy Harris who not only started the NTMC but was the reason Dolphin came into being. The photograph is one from a trip to Thaxted in 1989 and the men were doing particularly high hook-legs'

John Sweeney who is seen dancing in the foreground wrote an article entitled, 'The Morris in Nottinghamshire' and this was reproduced inside the magazine. The article gives a brief history of Morris Dancing, describes the various types of dancing that come under the umbrella term 'Morris', and briefly describes how a typical side functions. It also sought out new members not only for Dolphin but for all the local teams of whatever 'Morris' persuasion.

September 19<sup>th</sup> 1991 was set for the AGM. John Sweeney became the 10<sup>th</sup> Squire of Dolphin Morris Men when Ian Ambrose stepped down from the role. It is merely coincidence that his promotion comes so soon after the 'Folk On' article and cover photograph. Steve Daniels retained the role of Bagman. Mike Wilkinson became deputy Squire. Joe Oskiewicz took over the role of keeper of the scrapbook. Paul Geissler kept the sticks, and the beast elect was Steve Daniels. Fiscal demands forced a 100% rise in Subscriptions to a mighty £20 and for a further £12 one could purchase a new red sweatshirt bearing the side logo and name. This was a first for Dolphin who had discussed sweatshirts for several years; eventually it was Paul Geissler who caused it to happen.

Bert Cleaver, long time friend of the side came down on October 19<sup>th</sup> 1991 to give a days instruction in the Fieldtown tradition 10.00am – 4.30pm at the Village Hall Kingston on Soar. Firm but fair, Bert always makes his instructionals hard work but useful and informative.



Five days later on October 24<sup>th</sup> Dolphin appeared with Aidleys in the Evening Post in a photograph taken at Wollaton Park with the Hall in the background. The article that went with the photograph was written by John Sweeney and was similar in structure to the one that appeared in 'Folk On'.

John had taken on the role of publicity officer sometime earlier and this appears to be John trying to promote dancing and trying to encourage others to take it up. At about this same time John also produced a complete list of all the dancing sides locally together with contact details and circulated this list in an attempt to make sides more easily contactable. There was a copy lodged with the central library in Nottingham.



Dolphin's on parade are; John Sweeney, Chris Gigg, Dave Walters, Mike Wilkinson, Joe Oskiewicz, Phil Wrigley, Paul Geissler, Nick Murphy.

Aidleys are; Val Chadwick, Zoe Cockcroft, Micheline Harris, Julie Palmer, Linda Hewing, Ann Mitchell, Jan Hewitt, Maggie Proctor.

Micheline Harris recalls, *'I remember it like t'was yesterday. It wasn't an event at all; it was one of 2 photographs taken to illustrate an article as part of a recruiting drive for both Aidleys and Dolphin. The photographer was an eejit who wanted Aidleys to dance in clogs on a 45 degree incline, on grass, whilst surrounded by nasty-tempered lustful rutting stags. So we did. And somewhere there is the most ridiculous photograph of 8 Aidleys each bent double because of the slope, waving a be-clogged foot in the air, whilst scanning the horizon for thundering hooves.*

*Don't recall being inundated by new members....*



Rutland Morris Men held a day of dance and feast on November 2<sup>nd</sup> 1991 Dolphin attended, got the badge and Ian Ambrose had this to say: *'Thanks to all those who came along to the Rutland Day of Dance. Despite the weather it was a very enjoyable day and it was great to have a full Dolphin side at the Feast'.*

In this year it appears that Chris Gigg once more became a regular attendee and Alistair from Leeds joined Dolphin.

### **1991 Tours and what the newsletter reported**

**May 2<sup>nd</sup> Bull and Swan, Diseworth; Three Horseshoes, Hemington; Jolly Sailor, Hemington.** A reasonable start to the season, with some people watching us! Danced inside the Three Horseshoes, and fed by the landlord.

**May 9<sup>th</sup>. Three horseshoes, East Leake; Nags Head, East Leake; Red Lion, Costock.** A new tour. Reception at the Nags Head was quite good. Last stop became an open air practice due to absence of audience. A good turnout of Dolphin's, but most were ill or crippled.

**May 16<sup>th</sup>. Hoskins Wharf, Shardlow; Navigation, Trent Lock.** Pretty good, with sizeable crowd at The Navigation. Always a good tour, but should we do it later in the year?

**May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Plough, Normanton on the Wolds; Griffin's Head, Plumtree; Salutation, Keyworth.** Unfortunately not publicised in advance, and a rather cool reception at the Plough. The Griffin now has a beer garden and a conservatory for the audience to sit in. Could have been good, but we didn't really get our act together. Many of our usual musicians couldn't make it, so Chris played his concertina. Thanks. We didn't bother going to the Salutation.

**May 30<sup>th</sup>. Practice session, then dance at the Cap and Stocking, Kegworth.** A poor attendance at the practice, but several people 'just made it' in time for the pub. We put on a good show to a good audience.

**June 6<sup>th</sup>. Chequers, Stanton by Dale; Carpenter's Arms, Dale Abbey; White Hart, West Hallam.** First two stops fairly good. I missed the last pub (I got lost on the way) but I hear it was a pleasant end to the tour.

**June 13<sup>th</sup>. Old Swan, Worthington; Holly Bush, Breedon on the Hill; Saracens Head, Smisby.** Reprehensibly Steve failed to poster this tour. Still it went OK. Why do we do the Old Swan? I cannot remember an audience there ever. The Holly Bush is always good. We danced inside at the Saracens Head. A good reception, but it does nothing for our standard of dance. I think it was Bob who said that the tour, 'improved exponentially'. What?

**June 20<sup>th</sup>. Bradmore Village; Plough, Wysall; Generous Briton, Costock.** Every year I say that I will never dance at Bradmore again, and this year is no exception. This year I arrived early, due to bad planning, and sat for about half an hour with kids cycling round the car making witty remarks. An example would be, 'Hello Morris'. Then Paul turned up and the two of us waited for fifteen minutes whilst we were interviewed. E.g. 'Don't you feel like a twat dressing like that?' and then Paul who is a keen botanist, had foxgloves thrown in his face. Paul took this opportunity to offer to lead one of the boys by the ear to every house in the village until he was able to reunite him with his anxious parents. Eventually we (or, rather, the Maids of Clifton) started dancing. When Paul and I started a jig, one of the boys took it upon himself to safeguard Paul's hat. Here I must admit to a serious breach of professional standards (fortunately I am an amateur) and I split my slapstick over the child's head. I cannot tell a lie; I was irritated. I announced to the adult component of the audience that we had returned to perform to them despite the predictable behaviour of their children. This went down a bundle. Bradmore is the only village that I have come to expect problems from. Having said that the historical link with the village is something I would not wish to throw away lightly.

The Plough was OK, but the atmosphere doesn't seem the same these days. A few people enjoyed the show, but a lot just wanted to know what charity it was for before they decided whether to give money.

The stop at the Generous Briton was good, with a small but enthusiastic audience.

**June 27<sup>th</sup>. Practice session, then dance at the Plough, Normanton on Soar.** A poorly attended but enjoyable practice. Some Man Friday men turned up. We seem to be building up quite a relationship with Man Friday, which is a good thing. Predictably a few Dolphins just made it in time to the Plough at Normanton, where we danced to a small crowd before retreating indoors to dance in the hall. Gloria, the husky dusky landlady, was not the life and soul of the party as she usually is (she was busy or just couldn't face Joe) but she did put in an appearance.

The evening ended with a good music/song session, with John performing a memorable, 'Yellow Submarine' to the tune of Joseph Baker, or was it the other way round? Either way it was memorable. Good old John.

**July 4<sup>th</sup>. Ship, Lowdham; Marquis of Granby Hoveringham; finish at unknown pub.** A small audience, but a pleasant stop. Rose Haydock expressed a clear opinion of our dancing, all over Simon's shirt. The Black Horse was given a miss because we were not wanted. We went straight on to the Marquis, where we had an enthusiastic audience of Calverton Men who were on a cycle tour. They then led us to a pub in the middle of nowhere where we had a massive music session and the pub ran out of clean glasses. A good tour.

**July 11<sup>th</sup>. Star, West Leake; the Station, Kegworth; the Kings Head, Sutton Bonington.** Accompanied by Aidleys. The Star at West Leake is always one of my favourites. But the crowd was a bit smaller than usual. We had an audience of three (plus 500 Aidleys and their groupies) at the Station. Things were a bit better at the Kings Head although there were one or two obnoxious kids there. I ended up giving juggling lessons to a family group across the road. There was a thinly attended music session in the bar afterwards, after a brief flurry of ceilidh dancing in the car park.

**July 18<sup>th</sup>. Horse & Jockey, Selston; Shepherds Rest and Dixie's Arms, Bagthorpe.**

Not reported in the newsletter

**July 25<sup>th</sup>. Rancliffe Arms, Bunny Red Heart, Ruddington.**

Not reported in the newsletter



## CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE

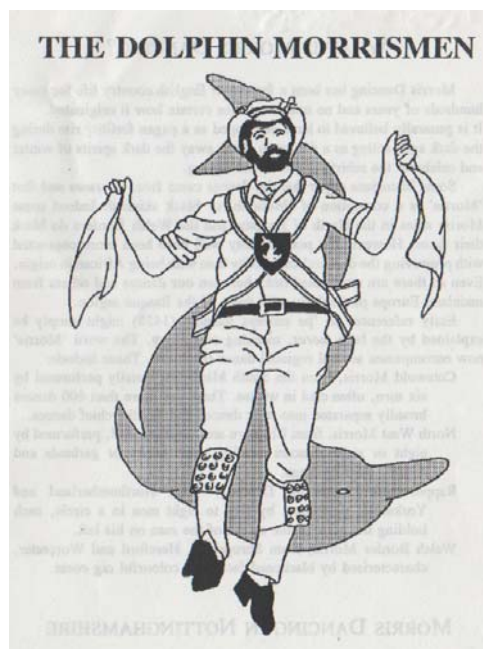
1992- The year of the Calvados Kid

1992 does not exist as far as photographs are concerned, there is little in the way of paperwork either. The newsletter that provided valuable snippets of trivia also went into hibernation and would not re-awaken until January 1998.

Right: The 1992 summer list of Thursday night tours carried this cover design.

Tours were:

May 7 <sup>th</sup>	Cap & Stocking, Kegworth
May 14 <sup>th</sup>	White Lion, Rempstone Plough, Wysall Generous Briton, Costock
May 21 <sup>st</sup>	Plough, Normanton on Soar Joint tour with Aidleys Morris
May 28 <sup>th</sup>	Apple Tree, Compton Acres Ferry, Wilford
June 4 <sup>th</sup>	Carpenters Arms, Dale Abbey Chequers, Stanton by Dale
June 11 <sup>th</sup>	Hoskins Wharf, Shardlow Navigation, Trent Lock
June 18 <sup>th</sup>	Holly Bush, Breedon on the Hill Saracen's Head, Smisby
June 25 <sup>th</sup>	Bradmore Village Joint tour with Maids of Clifton
July 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Guests of Aidleys Morris
July 9 <sup>th</sup>	Star, West Leake King's Head, Sutton Bonington Station Hotel, Kegworth
July 16 <sup>th</sup>	Red Lion, Bagthorpe Shepherd's Rest, Bagthorpe Dixie's Arms, Bagthorpe
July 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Joint tour with Ripley Morris Men Ship, Lowdham
July 30 <sup>th</sup>	Marquis of Granby, Hoveringham Black Lion, Radcliffe on Trent Royal Oak, Radcliffe on Trent Earl of Chesterfield Arms, Shelford



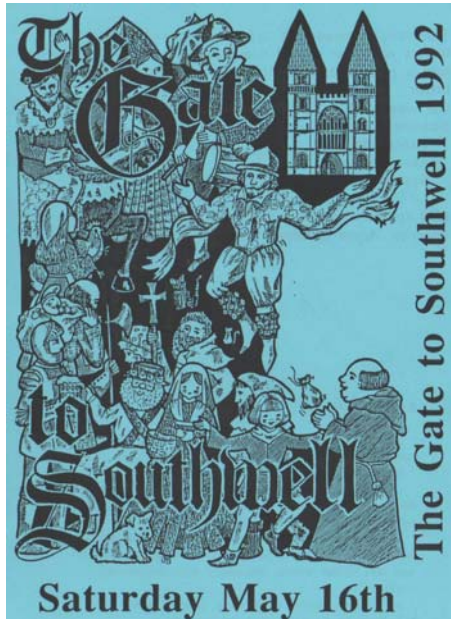
The only comment we have about these tours is from the Squires report at the AGM:

*'The usual Thursday tours in the summer were generally pretty good – at least we had an audience at a lot of them - even if it was just the other sides we went out with! And it didn't rain too much either'.*



The last Saturday of January 1992 was the date of the annual Ripley Ale Feast. Dolphin attended along with representatives from at least nineteen other teams and was fed Asparagus Soup, Beef Casserole or Vegetable Surprise, Apple Pie or Gateau, Cheese and Biscuits plus Tea or Coffee. Apparently there was beer available as well, but only for those who wanted it.

On 7<sup>th</sup> March 1992 a ceilidh was organised by Dolphin which raised £177.25 towards funds. John Sweeney at the AGM remarks that, *'The ceilidh was an outstanding success from an enjoyment point of view, if not quite as beneficial as we had hoped financially'*.



The 12<sup>th</sup> Gate to Southwell (since the revival) was on 16<sup>th</sup> May 1992. Dancing sides attending in 1992 were:

Aidleys Morris, Dukes Dandy Clog, Knighton Morris, Nottingham Pride Clog, Broadstone, Calverton, Chesterfield Garland, Foresters, Greenwood Clog, Maids of Clifton, Micklebarrow, Anstey Royal Chalfont, Black Pig, Portland Poklers, and Sergeant Musgrave's Dance.

The arrangements reverted to the 9.00am start time and with less travelling by bus there was more processing by the dancers.

John Sweeney in his AGM Squires report said, *'The new format of the Gate worked extremely well – nice to see so many new sides there. Congratulations to Bob for creating a new tradition – I believe some of the old people in the villages we dance through can remember when we used to do it when they were kids! Thanks for all the hard work Bob'*.

Jersey Morris Men held a Ring Meeting from May 22<sup>nd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> 1992 and Dolphin went along with a side. John Sweeney in his AGM Squires report had this to say, *'...but the highlight of the year for many was the trip to Jersey, especially since it was partially funded by the Jersey Tourist Board! Many thanks to Chris Villiers for standing in at the last minute to make up a side when I had to drop out due to pressure of work'*.



Left: Group photo taken at Ville de l'Eglise, Jersey on 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1992



Apparently, having no cider available for Chris Villiers, the Jersey men obtained some Calvados which Chris drank by the half pint glass. Even Chris's constitution gave way to the alcoholic properties of the beverage which got him the name of the 'Calvados Kid' and a place in Dolphin Morris legend. Under the influence he performed the Adge Cutler and the Worzels hit 'Chitterlings' to great critical acclaim (or was it 'The Tram song'?).

Thaxted Ring Meeting in 1992 was at the end of May and Dolphin were there on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> May 1992. Paul Geissler supplied the following photographs from the meeting:

Below: *Ian Stewart and Joe Oskiewicz demonstrating poise and balance at The Three Horseshoes*



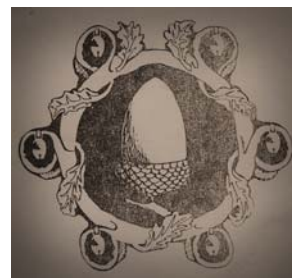
Below: *Ian Ambrose and Paul Geissler performing 'I'll Go and Enlist For a Sailor' jig from Sherborne, at The Bonnet at Ashdon.*



Since 1977 Dolphin had been attending the annual 'Chipperfield' weekend organised by The Greensleeves Morris Men. In 1992 it was held on 10<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> July being the second weekend of the month as was traditional.

During the daytime on Saturday Dolphin, were teamed with Greensleeves and Helmond Morris Men and, performed at various locations including: St Michael's Church, Amersham; The Eagle, Old Amersham; Red Lion, Coleshill; Merlin's Cave at Chalfont St Peter, and Bekonscot model Village.

Below: Bert Cleaver at *The Eagle, Old Amersham* and Nick Murphy and Ian Stewart at *The Red Lion, Coleshill*



After the Feast a walking tour was arranged with Dolphin now teamed with Spring Grove Morris and Greensleeves, visiting The Boot, Tower Hill and The Windmill, Chipperfield.

A performance at Cromford Carnival September 11<sup>th</sup> 1992 was notable for the fact that only two days before, the side were introduced to the dance 'British Grenadiers' a stick dance in the style of Fieldtown, and performed it at the Carnival. John Sweeney commented in his AGM report that as a dance it was, *'quite reasonably done considering that the cows had used the bit of field we were dancing on!'* and goes on to say, *'...it didn't start pouring until we had finished Bonny Green'*.

At the AGM on September 24<sup>th</sup> 1992 John Sweeney reported on the progress of new dances that had been tried. The Valentine from Fieldtown was very popular but had not been danced out as much as it might, since not all the musicians could play the tune.

Jenny Lind from Lichfield was extremely popular but required eight men to dance it and there was not always enough. John said that a four man version would continue to receive attention. Bean Setters from Ilmington had sunk without trace. Beaux from Badby had had an enthusiastic revival. The two man jig I'll Go and Enlist for a Sailor had been practiced more than it should have been due to low turnouts at practice or late arrivals, so it got danced quite a lot and was an excellent addition to the repertoire. The Rose needed some more attention. The Kingston Stick dance added some variety to tour dances.

John made mention to a booking at the University and said, *'We put on one of our best shows ever for the Royal Society of Chemists as the after dinner entertainment at the University. A varied 45 minute show, of dance, jig and song all superbly performed (apart from the song...remind me not to sing straight after a jig again!)*

*with a tremendous response from the audience. Maybe it was the record fee (£200) which inspired us – or maybe it was the unlimited free beer!’*

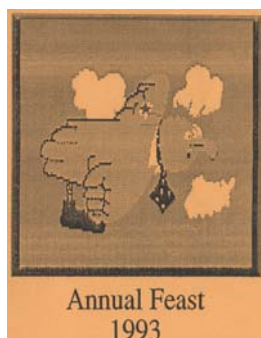
Little more is known about 1992 except references to Harlaxton Manor on November 21<sup>st</sup> and a Pizza party on December 7<sup>th</sup>. John Sweeney, at the 1993 AGM, gives a clue when he said, *‘The Christmas pizza party seemed to go well, anyone want another one?’* The minutes give the answer under item 2, *‘Xmas party to be at John’s as 92’*. The accounts produced at the AGM show that the Harlaxton booking brought in a fee of £45.

There were no new members in 1992.



## CHAPTER TWENTY SIX

1993 – Dolphin's had a weekend away in Utrecht, and suggests a register of floating men.



Ripley Morris Men's annual Ale Feast went ahead on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> January 1993 and the only clue that Dolphin attended is the programme/menu in the archive. This shows that Dolphin and nineteen other sides were represented. An '*interesting*' menu included: 'Isca' Bean soup, followed by 'Green Oak' Rogered Pigeon on a bed of sweetcorn accompanied by 'Anker' Courgette (lightly stuffed with Steak and Kidney Pie and Chips) and 'Packington' Sprouts. A vegetarian option of courgette without the stuffing was available. There was also beer.

Leicester Morris Men's annual feast would have gone ahead on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February 1993 and it is almost inconceivable that some Dolphin men did not attend but the only record that remains is a short note in Hicky Cheers' diary.

Another Dolphin fund raising ceilidh did go ahead at Wollaton Village Hall on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> March 1993. Bagman Steve Daniels note to the team states '*Wollaton Hall*' but the cost of hiring would probably eat up any profit so it is felt that perhaps it was a typing error. At the AGM it was reported that a profit of £258.78p was made and John Sweeney said, '*The ceilidh was an outstanding success from an enjoyment point of view – the slightly lower numbers made the dancing much better, and (learning from the previous year) it was also an excellent event for the bag*'.

A full Thursday night tours programme was organised, but there were fewer joint tours in line with the decision taken at the AGM. Records are few but it appears only two joint tours were 'pencilled' in one with Maids of Clifton at Bradmore Village and then one with Aidleys in July at the White Lion, Rempstone; The Plough, Wysall; and The Generous Briton, Costock.



The big event of the year was the Utrecht Ring Meeting which filled the weekend of May 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>.

Dolphin joined sides from:

Boar's Head, Bristol,  
East Suffolk, Hageneth,  
Helmond, Icknield Way,  
Norbridge, North-Wood,  
St Albans, Swaledale,  
Thaxted, Wath-upon-Dearne,  
Whitchurch, Wyvern Valley and  
Yateley.

The programme was written without any English translation but someone's careful use of a yellow highlighter pen showed that Dolphin were allocated to the 'Plassengebied Tour' (Swamp Tour) on 'Zaterdag 15 Mei' (Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> May): Dave Walters recalls, *'We were woken each morning by one of the host side going around the rooms playing the Reveille [on a bugle]. Continental breakfast was followed by the DIY lunch packing – we each got a bag to fill with cold meats, rubber cheeses and croissants)'*.

The notes were provided by the tour leader 'Hemmihg' (Dave Walters recalls, *'The Utrecht man in charge of the tour (Henning?) was a strict time-keeper and pyrotechnics fan - the signal to board the bus at every stop was a marine flare type of rocket thing that exploded loudly in the air'*).

10.30 Harmelen Hervormde kerk

*'Your throats will have to wait till the second show to get moisted, because of the first show will be given in front of a Calvinistic Church...'*

11.30 Nieuwkoop Rechthuisplein

*'We are now really in the former swamps of the river delta Holland exists off. As you see the water and road level are almost equally high. Further on we even dive under. Because of the amount of water, bridges of all kinds have been invented... We dance on the corner of the market and have the right for a drink'.*

13.00 Breukelen Kerkplein

*'All the way back in reversed order. The land on your left is lower than the water on your right. World wonder No 8. This is the green heart of Holland and where building activities are restricted. We cross the Amsterdam-Rijn channel which connects the River Rijn with Amsterdam harbour, over a very modern bridge. This is the lunch stop'.*

14.15 Maarssen plein bibliotheek

*'Towards Maarssen we drive on the banks of the Veche a small branch of the Rijn.....please don't hang around in Maarssen too long the next and last stop is much more pleasant'.*

15.30 Haarzuilens Brinkstraat/Brink

*'Being the smallest village of all we visited. The story is that when a landlord bought the castle in 1800, he wanted to have the estate to himself, so the village situated on his land together with all the farmers, cattle and whatever, he simply had it removed to just outside his estate. The villagers therefore did not want to wear the estate arms anymore, and that's the reason of this strange house painting you see'.*

Another itinerary sheet written in English gives some basic timings and information.

On Saturday at 7.15 am it says, *'We will make sure that you get up for breakfast'!*

(Is this a threat or a gesture?) [Threat!]. Bus times and basic tour information is followed by, *'17.00 having seen the beautiful Dutch countryside you should have arrived back by now. Also at this time the bar opens...'*

There was little time available before the feast for taking advantage of the bar or freshening up.

17.30 A show of Dutch dancing by 'Pieremachochol' was provided

18.00-19.45 the Feast

20.30-22.00 Show at Veenendaal. Dancers were transported in two shifts to provide entertainment in the Market Square of the town.



On Zondag 16 Mei (Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> May) the plans included:

7.30am Wake up call! [More bugle!]

10.30am Pre-booked boat trip along the canals of Utrecht or Church service

12.30pm Processional.....with special surprise! (*Dansprocessie bij het Domplein*)

Chris Gigg recalls, ‘. *On the Sunday we processed from 2 or 3 different places into the square. They had programmed the cathedral bells to play Winster, it was a bit slow*’.

Dave Walters memory is, ‘*The grand finale was an unusual and brilliantly thought out procession. Unfortunately it didn’t work out quite as well as Utrecht had hoped. They had got the bells in the church in the centre of the City to play the Winster Processional and the plan was for the teams to process in from several starting points in time to the music. The bells were struggling to keep up to dance speed and the rhythm wasn’t quite right either, so we had to improvise. It all looked a bit messy but has gone down in legend, so that’s the main thing.*’

13.00-15.30 Mass show at the Domplein (*Grote show met +/-200 morrisdansers*)



John Sweeney reported to the AGM, ‘...we saw Alastair [Sayles] at Utrecht where he joined us in celebrating the Eurovision song contest by helping choreograph a version of Bonny Green to the tunes of “Puppet on a String” and “Celebration” [Congratulations?] with music provided by Simon Richie of Thaxted Morris Men’.



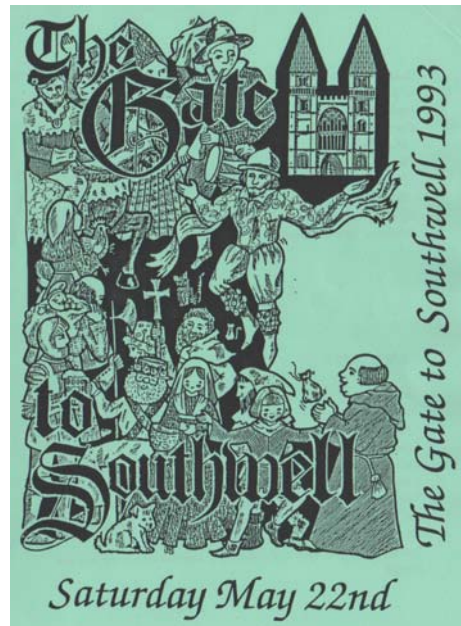
John continued, *although it was generally a very pleasant weekend the best part of the Ring Meeting for me was the bit just after it finished when we busked at the canal-side pubs. And the real highlight of the trip was the session in the ship's bar on the way back*.

Dave Walters remembers, *'The overnight crossing started with us all sitting chatting and listening to a pianist plinky-plonking some standards, but since there were quite a few Morris men on the boat we asked if we could do a dance. That led to another, and another, then a few songs, and eventually we spent most of the night singing, dancing, barn dancing with the 'normal' passengers – the pianist had the night off. I think we retired to our cabins at about 4am, and I don't think I could sleep for the heat and the engine noise'*.

The 13<sup>th</sup> Gate to Southwell on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1993 was attended by the following sides: Anstey Royal Chalfont; Greenwood Clog; Sergeant Musgrave's Dance; Stone Monkey; Dolphin Morris Men; Dukes Dandy Clog; Maids of Clifton; Portland Poklers; Aidleys; Broadstone; Calverton; Micklebarrow; Oaks and Acorns, and Shuttlers Clog



Left: The design chosen for the souvenir badge of The Gate 1993



## Morris Ring Meeting

5th - 6th JUNE, 1993

THAXTED



At Thaxted Ring Meeting in 1993 Dolphin were on Tour F and dancing with: Colchester Morris Men And Whitchurch Morris Men.

Dance spots included:

- 10.15 Georges Yard, Braintree
- 11.00 The Olney Arms, Stisted
- 12.00 The Chapel Inn, Coggeshall
- 12.45 The Lion, Earles Colne
- 2.30 Falcon Square, Castle Hedingham
- 3.40 Little Bardfield

At the AGM it was reported that the dance The Rose had been, *'practiced hard but we still weren't too confident about doing it in public'.... 'Actually it did go down well when we danced it around a small rose-laden roundabout in a village near Thaxted'*.

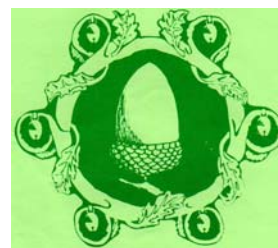
The second week of July was the Chipperfield weekend when Greensleeves and selected friends get together for a mini Ring Meeting. In 1993 Dolphin joined, East Surrey, Spring Grove, Wath-upon-Deane and Chester City Morris Men as guests of Greensleeves Morris Men.

On Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> July Dolphin toured with Chester and Greensleeves 'B' and visited:

Chesham – Elgiva Hall and Town Centre and Queen's Head Public House. Lunch and two displays were given at The Swan at Leys Hill, finally performing at Chalfont Shire Hall Centre.

In the evening after the feast there was more dancing at The Boot, Tower Hill.

The programme points out that the hall is available for more dancing after the pubs shut and that the kitchen area will host the 'Chipperfield Literary and Philosophical Society' annual meeting until 4 am. Wise words and innovative ideas will be tossed around in the ale fuelled session and as is traditional, no one takes down any minutes.



Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1993 and the AGM was witnessed by ten Dolphins: Ian Stewart, Mike Wilkinson, Dave Walters, Ian Ambrose, Martin Morley, Chris Deuchar, Joe Oskiewicz, Nick Murphy, John Sweeney and Steve Daniels.

The detailed minutes prepared by Steve Daniels give barely a hint of the deep and meaningful discussions and the 'head to heads' that must have happened in the back room of the Village Hall at Kingston on Soar. Steve condensed everything into thirteen simple points:

1. *No apologies for absence*
2. *Xmas party to be at John's as 92*
3. *Subs to remain £20*
4. *All existing officers re-elected. Unanimous*
5. *Mike to be keeper of the scrapbook*
6. *Stickman – no volunteers*
7. *Ring Meeting. Our services to be offered. Date ASAP '95.*
8. *Recruitment. Posters to be put up in libraries, universities, Sut Bon School of Ag. Etc. Register of 'floating' men to be produced. Other sides/individuals to be invited to join our practice. Tour leaflet to include map and advert for practice.*
9. *Joint tours to be limited to 1 with Maids of Clifton (Bob's tour – Bradmore) and 1 with Aidleys (Dave's). Both to be 2 stop max. A one stop tour to be arranged for mass invite to be issued.*
10. *Ceilidh – to be arranged for March [1<sup>st</sup> Sat] alternative venues to be investigated*
11. *Songs. 'Dated' words in Bonny Green to be dropped in favour of traditional words*
12. *Dancing Traditions. Meeting in pub to discuss*
13. *Bookings. Retain Kingston and S.B. but no other 'fetes'. Definite 'yeses' only to be counted. A 'yes' to be taken as a firm commitment.*

*Steve Daniels 24/9/93*

John Sweeney's report added other facts into the melting pot. Regarding new dances he said, *'British Grenadiers was practiced frequently but somehow never seemed to come out quite right on the night. It hasn't really improved since we danced it at Cromford after only ONE practice!'*



*'Black Joker (Ilmington) went much better – it proved popular and we sometimes got it right in public!'*

*'The Rose was also practiced hard – but we still weren't too confident about doing it in public'.*

John also observed that, *'in updating the list of traditional sides in the area I have noticed a disturbing trend. A number of well established sides are disappearing, often due to lack of recruits. The Dolphin is also being steadily eroded away, and sadly, various health problems aren't helping either. It would be nice if we could all make it all the time, but since that is extremely unlikely we could really do with a couple of good recruits – anyone got any ideas?'*



Nottinghamshire County Council hoped to 'resurrect' the West Country tradition of Apple Wassailing! County Apple Day was pencilled in for Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1993 and the ceremony was to be re-enacted at Norwood Park at 3pm on that date. Dolphin Morris Men were chosen to assist with the details.

The elements of the Wassail ceremony included;

1. Everyone forms a circle round an apple tree (Morris Men and Wassail Queen stand in the middle)
2. The Green Man introduces the ceremony
3. The Morris Men do Brighton Camp and lift up Wassail Queen. The WQ then soaks a piece of toast in cider and places it in the branches of the tree, helped by the Morris Men if necessary
4. The WQ then pours cider over the roots of the tree
5. Everyone reads the Wassail poem;  
Here's to thee good apple tree  
To bear and blow, apples enow (sic)  
This year, next year, and the year after too,  
Hatsful, capsful, three-bushel bagsful  
And pay the farmer well.
6. Shotguns are fired over the top of the trees and everyone makes as much noise as possible. Morris Men do Shooters dance.
7. Morris men sing songs and dance round the trees;  
The Rose  
A Wassail Song  
The Toast
8. Walk to new location and begin the ceremony again.



There was a practice planned for 1.30pm at Norwood Park.

1993 finished with:

A party at John Sweeney's on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December.

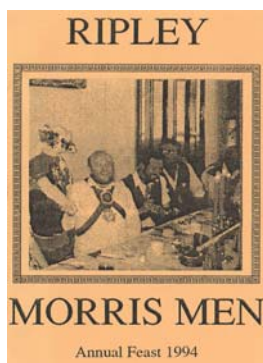
A practice with carols at the pub on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> December.

And in a fit of unparalleled keenness a final practice on Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> December.

## CHAPTER TWENTY SEVEN

1994 – The Foreman has a Hooley to celebrate his wedding

The first recorded event of 1994 is for a Young Farmers Club. No details remain as to location but a YFC 'Thank You' postcard in the archive was sent to Mike Wilkinson by 'Helen'. Information contained within the postcard leads to the event having been on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January. Mike Wilkinson recalls, 'I have no recall at all'



Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> January 1994 and Dolphin was one of twenty sides that helped Ripley to enjoy another annual Ale Feast.

Food included:

'Surprise' Soup,

'Choice' Pudding,

and

Vegetarian Option – 'perhaps'.

As always there was beer, which some men drank.

Another successful Dolphin ceilidh produced £258 for team funds. This success was becoming the norm and did not merit any comment at the AGM from the Squire. In fact the Squire chose to concentrate on dancing standards, and how to achieve more improvement, than to comment on individual events. This is perhaps because the report was actually written by Mike (or so a handwritten comment on the report, would suggest).

A full tour programme of thirteen Thursdays between May 5<sup>th</sup> and July 28<sup>th</sup> 1994 was planned. There are no reports or comments about individual events but joint tours were arranged.

May 26<sup>th</sup> Dolphin was with Aidleys at The Red Lion, Stathern; The White Hart, Harby, and The Black Horse, Hose.

A joint tour with Ripley Morris Men saw the sides at The Red Lion, Shepherds Rest and Dixie's Arms at Bagthorpe. Ripley in their tour programme described it as, '*The Bagthorpe Birthday Pub Tour with Dolphin*'.

On July 28<sup>th</sup> the tour programme shows, '*Jon's stag night*' and Dolphin along with Portland Poklers danced at The Carpenter's Arms at Dale Abbey. This was a break with Dolphin's tradition as one stop tours were never promoted then or later. Jon and Emma's links to the two teams brought them together for this one off occasion. Two days later on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> July Dolphin and Portland Poklers were at the wedding of Jon Melville and Emma Garland (along with other sides).

The weekend of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> June 1994 and at least thirteen Dolphin men went to Thaxted. Photographs show; Nick Murphy, John Sweeney, Chris Deuchar, Martin Morley, Steve Daniels, Joe Oskiewicz, Ian Stewart, Jon Melville, Ian Ambrose, Dave Walters, Mike Wilkinson Chris Gigg and Paul Geissler. It is not known to what tour Dolphin was allocated or which teams also toured.





Above: Six musicians perform a Bampton 'chicken chasing' dance in a pub



Above and below: Dolphin also had good appetites. Seen here at the lunch stop.



Below: Ready to process from outside the church to the Town centre displays







Above: *The Rose in the afternoon*      Below: *Upton upon Severn stick, in the evening*



Left and Below: *Mike with studded wrist band plays for the Sherborne Jig, 'I'll Go and Enlist For a Sailor', here danced by Ian Ambrose and John Sweeney*



The Gate to Southwell, the 14<sup>th</sup> in a series took place the week after Thaxted, on the 11<sup>th</sup> June 1994.

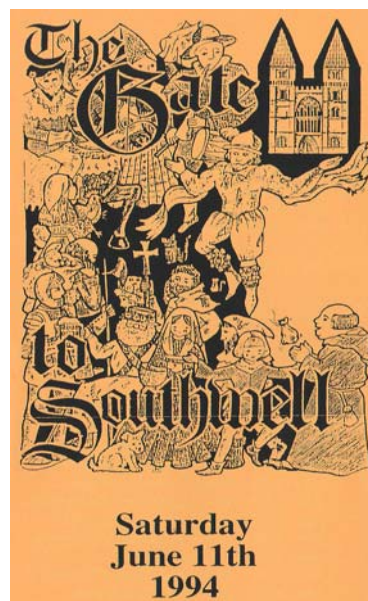
The new format, single sheet, tri-fold programme lists the attendant teams in 1994 as:

Chesterfield Garland  
Oaks and Acorns

Nottingham Pride  
Sergeant Musgrave's  
Dance

Calverton MM  
Foresters MM  
Maids of Clifton  
Portland Poklers  
Aidleys Morris  
Anstey Royal Chalfont  
Ladybay Revellers  
Stone Monkey

Dolphin MM  
Greenwood Clog  
Micklebarrow MM



There had been a stag night dance out for Jon and Emma but the credit for the first wedding of 1994 goes to Ian Stewart and Hicky Cheers. In '*a deliberately small affair*' the happy couple wearing '*jeans and sweatshirts*' tied the knot at West Bridgford Registry Office. After the ceremony, '*We celebrated by going across the street to a café, where Hicky had herself a Danish pastry...with cream in it!*'



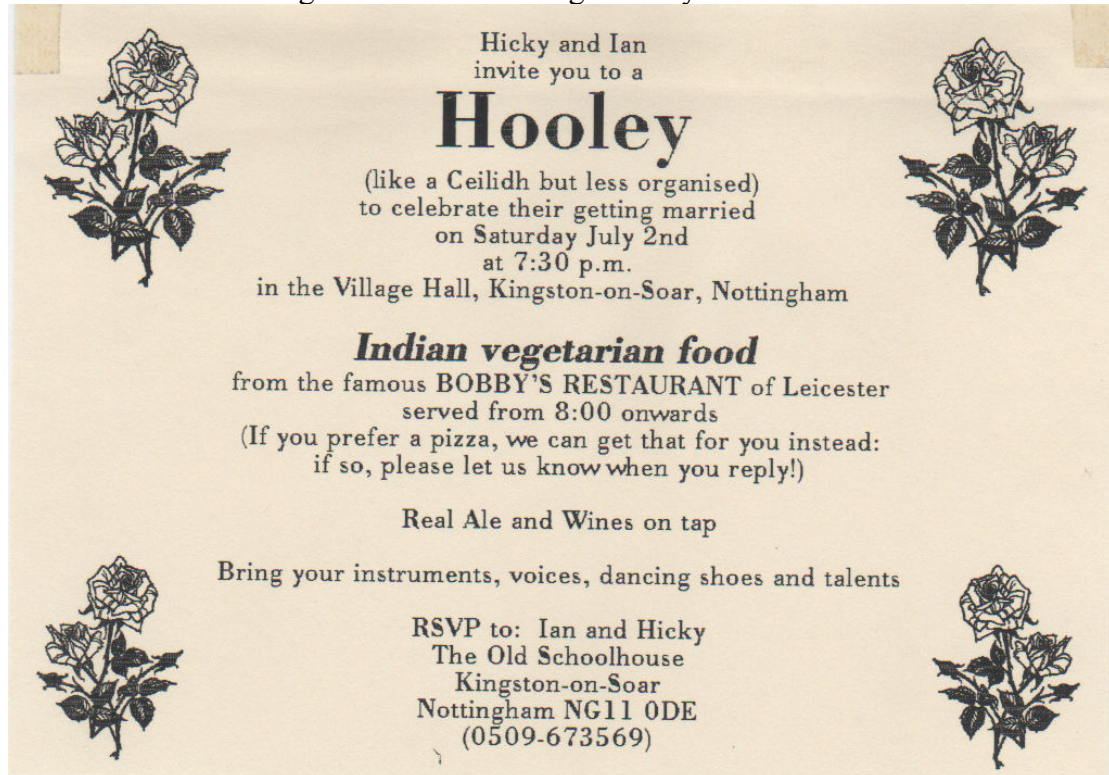
This was followed by a spot of lunch at The Star, West Leake. By a strange twist of fate, while lunch was being taken at an outside table, the Foresters Morris Men out on a lunchtime tour, turned up to dance.



There was no stopping the Foresters once they realised that the newly weds were in the audience. A quick 'Brighton Camp' was performed and before she knew it Hicky was being held aloft and groped by this group of old blokes. Here she can be seen pretending to enjoy the experience! A passing juggler was also having lunch but sadly his efforts at teaching Hicky's stepmother to juggle were not 'snapped'.



Later that same evening there was a wedding 'Hooley':



The Dolphin men were of course invited and danced.



Ian says, 'It was a sweltering hot evening and everybody was made even hotter by the fact that we'd got the food in from Bobby's restaurant in Leicester, our favourite Gujarati curry place [There was pizza for the less hardy souls] Dolphin did Brighton Camp, and played a merry jest on me by making to throw Hicky up and then throwing me up instead'.

'So when all that was over, everybody went home and we spent the next couple of hours cleaning up the hall and then crashed out. End of wedding story'.



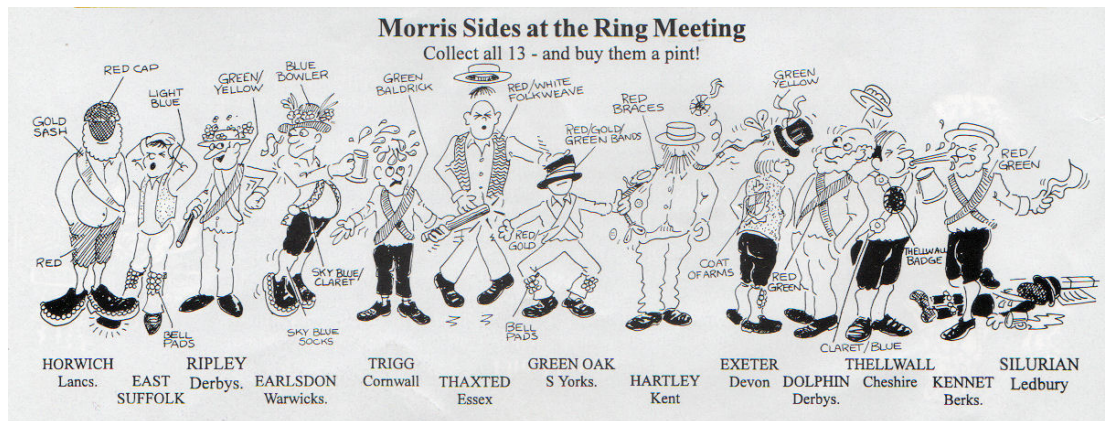


*Above: Random guests grabbed napkins and leaped about pretending they could dance*

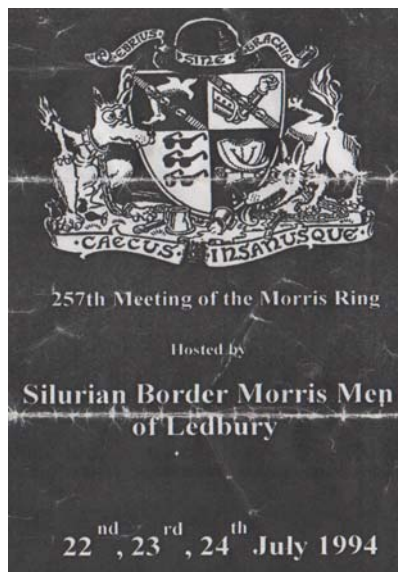
Ian and Hicky lived happily ever after, eventually moving to a small castle they had built in a piece of land they called the Vale of Belvoir. With only the cats and the servants they lived quietly surrounded only by Ian's collection of musical instruments and a selection of beers of the world, that were kept for special occasions (which by luck occurred most evenings!)

After the wedding Ian was occasionally let out to dance with the Dolphin Morris Men, one occasion being The 257<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Morris Ring hosted by the Silurian Border Morris Men of Ledbury.





*Above: Dolphin represented by an old man! And located in Derbys!*



*Left: Here we see the cover of the programme for the Ring Meeting. Recovered during excavation work from the home of Martin Morley in Long Eaton .*

Four tours went out on the Saturday:

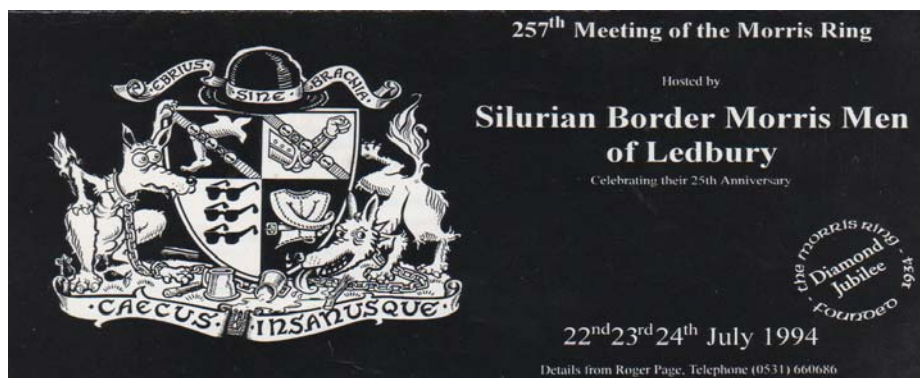
Ross-on-Wye  
 Worcester  
 Gloucester  
 Hereford







Above: Paul Geissler nicked everyone's flowers so they had to dance hatless in the evening



Left: A Free bookmark of the event for you to cut out and keep



This Ring Meeting holds memories too painful to bring to the attention of the reader. Too much has been said already; please respect the need for silence on this matter. Clue... *'blow into this bag sir'*.







*The idyllic scene to the left was photographed in the grounds of St Barnabus Church, Lenton Abbey on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> July 1974.*

*Mr Jon Melville (left) became the slave of the beautiful and wanton Emma Garland (right).*

A reception was later held at Park Farm Barn, Donington where a large number of Morris people turned up to dance.

There were full sides from Derby Morris Men (Jon's first side), Portland Poklers (Emma's side), East Suffolk (Emma's dad's side) and Dolphin.

In beautiful weather all teams danced outside, including a jig by the bride's father played for by the groom's father. At the evening ceilidh there was more dancing from Derby MM and Dolphin.



The union would prove strong far into the future and there would be many children to continue the line. Fate decreed that they would be called Toby and Hazel and that they both would dance.

In August each year Kingston-on-Soar held a village fete and for several years Dolphin Morris Men were asked to perform. Here we see the men dancing on August 20<sup>th</sup> 1994:



*Above: Rare photo of Joe playing for The dancing*



*Above: Dave Walters 'showing' off his skill at touching each side of the photograph*





Above: *More photographs from Kingston on Soar*

The AGM in on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> September 1994 delivered no surprises. All officers remained in place. It was decided that no new dances would be introduced during the coming practice season and that all dances not performed in public will be dropped from the dance list.

Mike prepared a report about his fooling, why he constantly changed his kit, and wrote at length about his new staff of office, his '*chaplinesque*' cane (seen in the Kingston fete photos). Mike explained that the bladder or stick was a traditional means to keep wayward Morris Men in check.

1994 was the twenty sixth anniversary of the side and a reunion of old members was arranged for Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September. The place was the function room of The Steamboat Inn at Trent Lock. All were welcomed including partners and children. One week later a dance out at Shardlow was arranged and all were also invited for more reunion fun.



Above: *Surveillance cameras caught the men disposing of evidence*

Below: *Various photographs from the reunion*







Many old and new members attended and discussed 'the old days' of Dolphin, got up and danced with limbs that still retained some memory of the steps, and sang the occasional chorus or tapped feet to the ancient rhythms of the Morris. A good time was had by one and all and there were many comments about the next reunion. Some drank beer. A further get together took place at The Station, Kegworth where more memories were exchanged and old cine film footage was shown;



*Above: Bob here fiddling with his knob until it all became clear to him*





*Above: Denny Plowman, Michael Scott, Roy Dyson, Mike Scott, and Mick Couldry at the Station Hotel*

October 8<sup>th</sup> 1994 and with the reunion events a memory Bob Hine organised a ceilidh for the Gate to Southwell 1995.



October 23<sup>rd</sup> 1994 and it was Apple Wassailing time again, at Southwell. Toast and cider anyone?

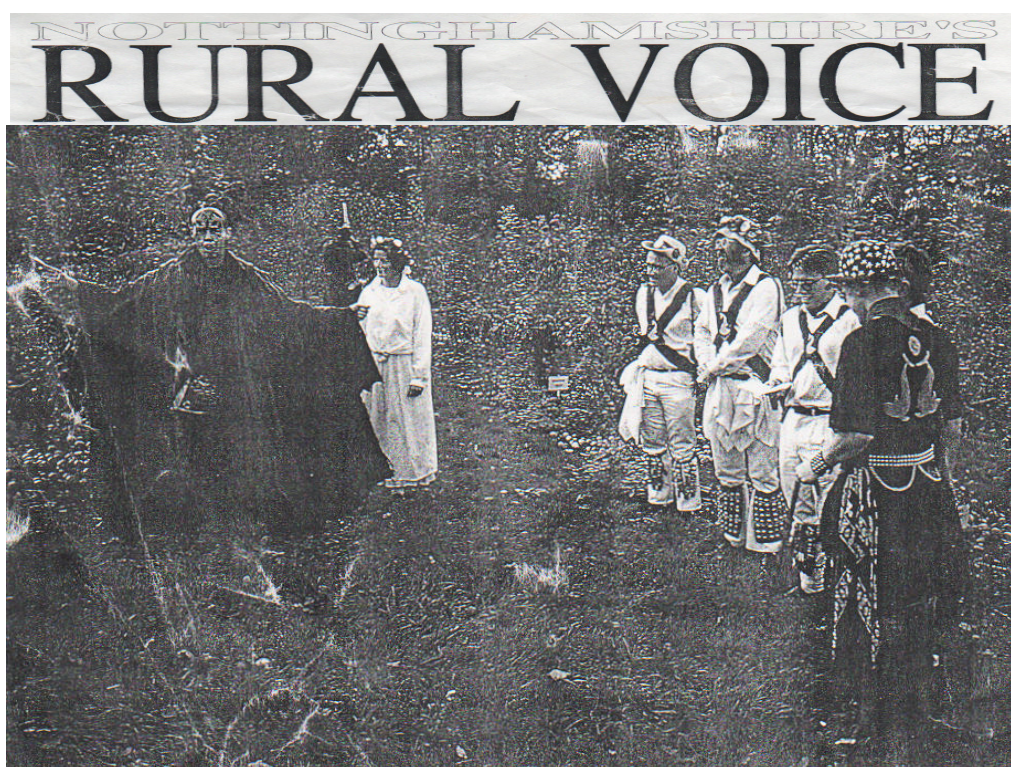


*Above: Dancing around the Green Man*



*Above: around the Apple Queen*





Volume 16 No 1's cover picture



Above: *Pure symmetry from Dave Walters and Jon Melville*



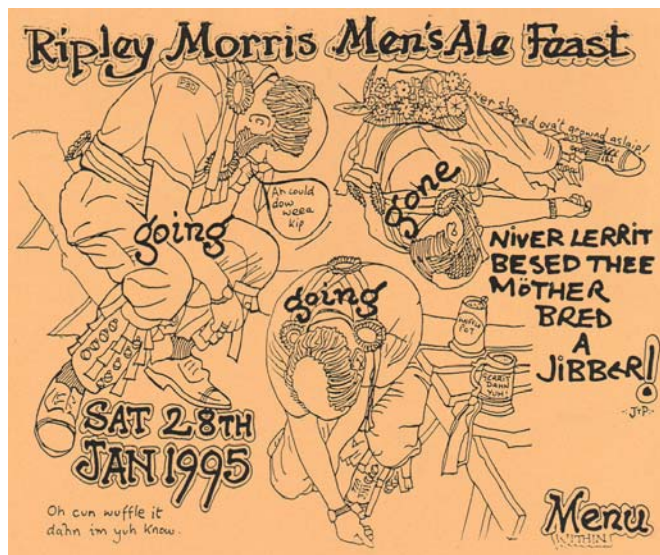
At Christmas, having a party, then it has to be Pizza. Dolphin assembled at John Sweeney's for the festive bash on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December 1994. The 1995 AGM records a vote of thanks for Maggie Sweeney for organising the night.



## CHAPTER TWENTY EIGHT

1995 – Dolphin's third Ring Meeting

Another year and more of the same, but in 1995 Dolphin organised their third Ring Meeting, were guests at another, and with pub tours well into August it was a busy year in progress.



January 28<sup>th</sup> 1995 and a total of twenty five sides are represented at the annual Ripley Ale Feast. The menu boasts six beers plus a cider and luxury chocolates by Thornton's of Belper. With their usual respect for the vegetarians within the Morris their whimsical alternatives included Lettuce Soup, Lettuce with Vegetables, Carrot Cake with Lettuce Sorbet and Crystallised Lettuce Leaf. Once more the 'Band of Hope' was not invited.

One week after Ripley, Leicester's Annual Feast goes ahead on February 4<sup>th</sup> 1995. Another thirteen sides and Dolphin enjoyed Leicester Morris Men's hospitality, Plus Marston's Bitter and Bateman's Mild. Four past Squire's of the Morris Ring, various Ring representatives and Wocko are listed as guests. Ian Stewart is listed as a 'sometime Leicester dancer'. The menu boasted Parsnip and Potato Soup, Minced Beef Cobbler and amongst the vegetables was 'Clapshot'.



Fifteen Thursday night tours were organised with the other ancillary events interspersed throughout the year. Another Dolphin ceilidh was organised, the date according to Hicky's diary was May 20<sup>th</sup>. The only other reference to a ceilidh was a handwritten addition to the Squires AGM report.

### Morris Ring Meeting

3rd-4th June 1995

THAXTED



Eighteen sides went to Thaxted. Dolphin were placed on tour B with Exeter MM and Milton MM and during the day danced at:

10.15am	Black Bull, Buntingford
11.15am	Three Tuns, Great Hormead
12.15pm	Axe & Compasses, Braughing
2.15pm	The Star, Furneux Pelham
3.30pm	Market Square, Saffron Walden

Below: *The only photograph from the tour, taken at Saffron Walden*



The fifteenth Gate to Southwell 1995 programme mentions Michael Cupitt a Calverton Morris Man who died that year, and that the collection will be to benefit his family.

Dance sides taking part are listed as:

Anstey MM	
Anstey Royal Chalfont	
Broadstone MM	Calverton MM
Foresters MM	Greenwood Clog
Micklebarrow MM	Aidleys Morris
Dolphin MM	Ladybay Revellers
Maids of Clifton	Mortimer's Morris
Nottingham Pride	Black Pig
Stone Monkey	Oaks & Acorns

Right: *The souvenir badge was designed by Chris Deuchar*





Dolphin in company with The Maids of Clifton made their yearly visit to Bradmore Village on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1995. Below, the teams can be seen processing down Main Street at Bradmore. In evidence are the children of the village who over the years Mike Wilkinson has spoken of in such glowing terms. Mild mannered, unstoppable Mike has been reduced to acts of violence both verbal and physical and has described them as the worst children he has ever come across...



Below: Mike in 'Rasta' top fules kit and Jon Melville before he grew a beard in July



Two years in the planning Dolphin's third Ring Meeting arrived on the weekend of 30<sup>th</sup> June to 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1995. A deliberately small affair with the following sides in attendance:

Hartley Morris Men  
 Richmondshire Morris Men  
 Wyre Forest Morris Men  
 Lord Conyers Morris Men  
 Thelwall Morris Men

Two tours were planned:

Great Central Tour  
 And  
 Trent Canal Tour

The weekend was based at Sutton Bonington and used The Kings Head public house as the 'local' for the Friday and Saturday evening 'sessions'. Saturday saw the teams bussed to Nottingham for a 10.00am show in the City Centre. After taking refreshment at local hostelrys, a further show was performed, at the main gate to Nottingham Castle. Following this show the group split into two groups.

Great Central Tour		Trent Canal Tour	
12.00	White Lion, Rempstone.	12.00	The Star, West Leake
13.00	The Plough, Wysall.	13.00	The Red Lion, Kegworth
14.00	Generous Briton, Costock.	14.30	Jolly Sailor, Hemington
16.00	Great Central Railway, Loughboro'.	15.30	The New Inn, Shardlow

Richard Hankinson, The Squire of the Ring, had this to say in the Autumn Edition of the Ring Circular:

*In July I was in the East Midlands at the Dolphin Ring Meeting. I really enjoyed the Dolphin probably because it was a small meeting in comparison with some and was situated in a village environment. The landlady at the Kings Head made us all very welcome. I understand we drank all her beer on Friday and part of her Saturday was taken up ringing round other land-lords/ladies in the area to borrow more. And then there was Julie the barmaid – I've always liked lycra leotards!*

*The crack at the Kings Head was terrific on both Friday and Saturday evenings and, being Squire, I thought it only right that Tony Parsons and myself should ensure that everybody got back safely. This resulted in us leaving at 2.30am Saturday and I believe it was something after 3.0am on Sunday. During the weekend I was able to sample the delights of Morris, ale, and live steam all at the same time, when we visited the Great Central Railway at Loughborough. Indeed Wyre Forest enjoyed the ride so much they didn't get off at their appointed stop. Whilst on my way to the Rutland meeting two weeks later, I found that I was almost passing the doors of the Kings Head and again popped in for a quick pint'.*

The next major event was the Isle of Wight Ring Meeting from 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> August 1995



Above: Mike Wilkinson, John Sweeney, Ian Ambrose, Dave Walters, Chris Gigg, Joe Oskiewicz, Steve Daniels, Paul Geissler, Ian Stewart



Nine Dolphins attended this Ring Meeting and on the Saturday were allocated to THE RAILWAY TOUR in the company of, Cuphill from Surrey, Standon from Hertfordshire and Hageneth from Suffolk.

The tour by vintage coach took in dancing spots at:  
10.00am The Parade at West Cowes opposite the Britannia and The Anchor on the high Street (two teams at each spot)

10.20am all teams at The Anchor

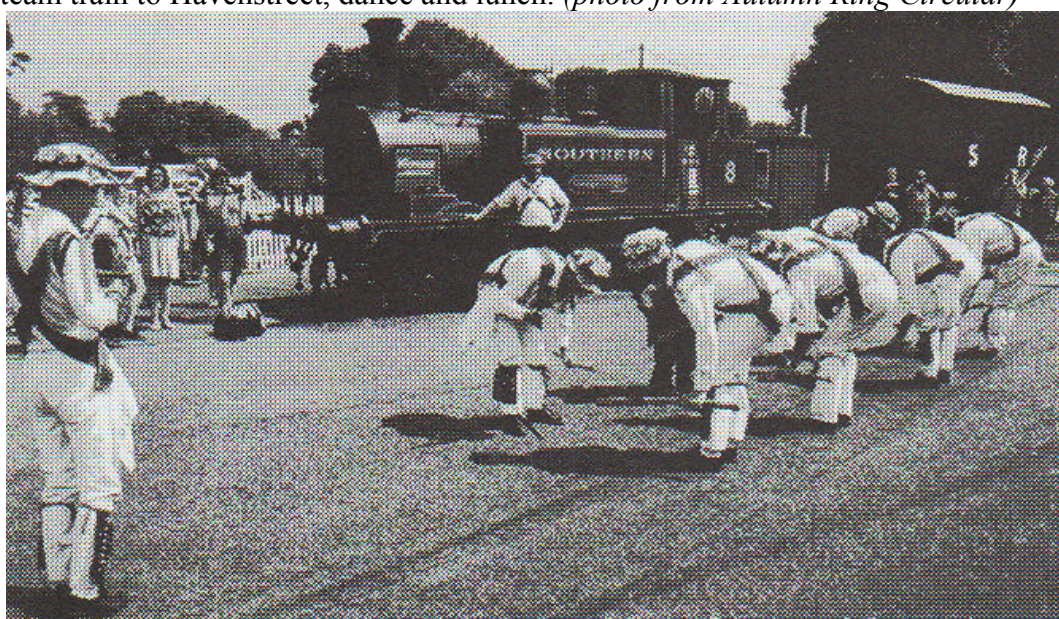
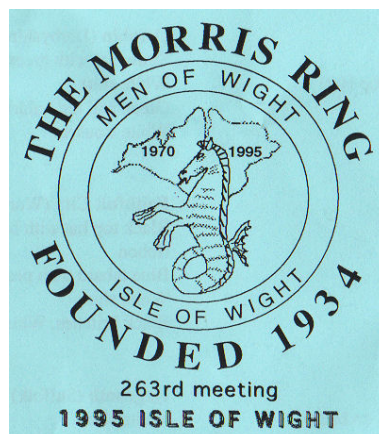
Then on a floating bridge to East Cowes

11.00am Old Town Hall, East Cowes

11.55am The Cedars, Wooton

12.35pm walk to Wooton Station

Steam train to Havenstreet, dance and lunch. *(photo from Autumn Ring Circular)*



3.00pm Sandown Seafront for massed display

At the feast at the Isle of Wight College the men were fed from a menu of;

*Cullen skink  
The Grand Old Duke of York  
Wight Flowers  
Green Swaggering Boney's  
Ye Coats of Tatties  
Lumps of Bread Pudding  
The Squire and Bagman of Cheeses*

At the AGM Mike Wilkinson in his "Fule's Riport" had this to say, *High spot of the year as a Dolphin: Dancing on the small car ferry on the Isle of Wight. High spot of the year as a Fule: Probably the old folks' home on the Isle of Wight'.*

John Sweeney thanked Maggie, *'For entertaining us on the Isle of Wight'.*

During the weekend, and while snorkelling in the sea, Steve Daniels lost his spectacles. Not having a waterproof pen to mark the spot Steve trod water until help arrived! Steve hadn't taken into account the effect of the moon on the tides or his cork like movement in the waves. Steve wore John Sweeney's spare pair for the remainder of the weekend.

Minutes of the 1995 AGM show that by unanimous approval the side officers remained the same, that Dave Walters became the 'stick man' and Nick took over the keeping of the scrapbook.

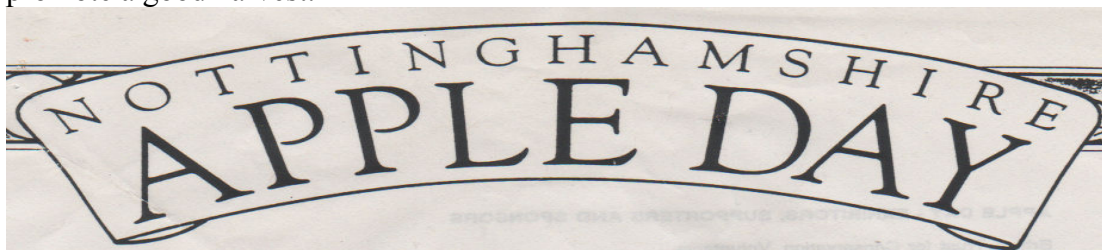
Subscriptions to be raised to £25 but discounted to £20 if paid before October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Agreement was obtained on Nick's suggestions of:

Kit being white and clean, no badges on hats, and fresh flowers whenever possible.

After-practice pubs were to be strictly rotated using The Red Lion, Kegworth; King's Head, Sutton Bonington, and The Star, West Leake. There was a general feeling that attendances at practice had slipped and side members were turning up later in the evening, and that the side had lost a 'bit of its edge' in performance. This had to be remedied to get the side back on track and would be looked at over the next few months. A recommendation was made that every dancer learns a jig or two and dances them out.

October 23<sup>rd</sup> and Dolphin once again Wassailed the apple trees at Norwood Park to promote a good harvest.



The 1995 'Apple Day' programme was packed with things to suit all tastes: Tractor & trailer rides, guided walks, story telling, mobile cider press, apple cooking demonstrations, the apple roadshow, pruning demonstrations, apple tasting, wine making, woodturning and apple games, bee keeping and of course Morris Dancing and the 'Grand Wassail' with the Green Man and the Wassail Queen.

Another pizza party was organised in December but nothing more is known about it.

During the year Clive Cowx became a Dolphin. Clive had danced with Adlington Morris Men; Staffordshire Morris Men and Leicester Morris Men prior to this move, and had been the Bagman at Leicester at one time.

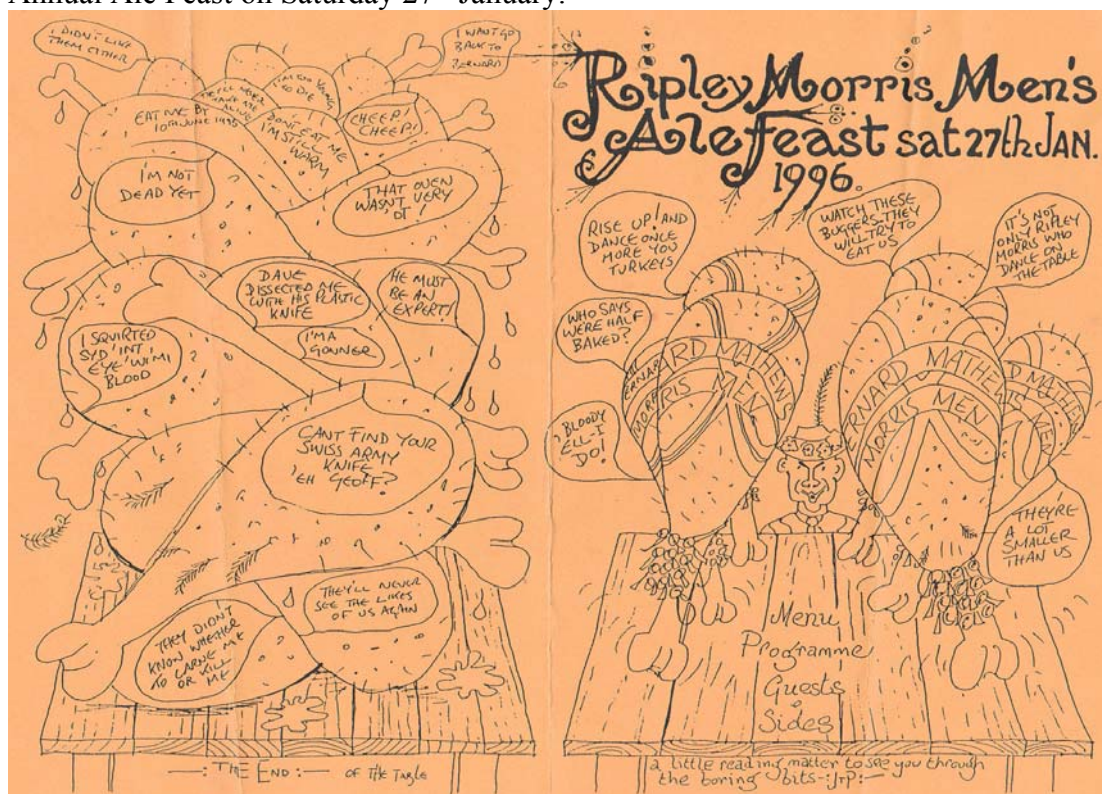


## CHAPTER TWENTY NINE

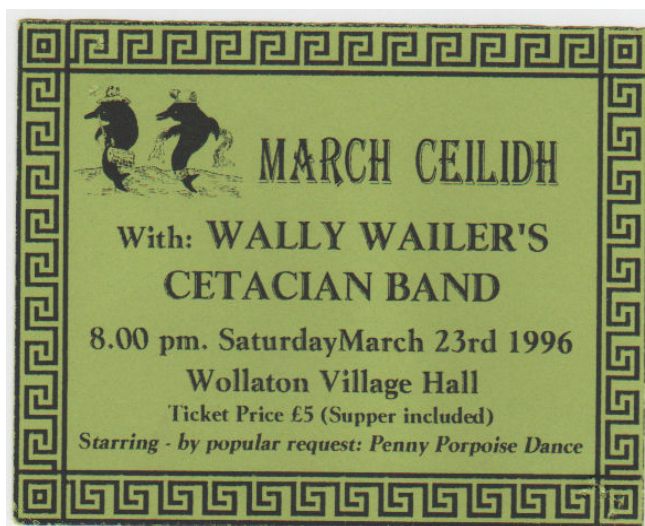
1996 – Dolphin were in Jersey again, and there's many a slip at Thaxted, it was also agreed - no kissing!

At the AGM in September 1996 John Sweeney said, 'Not quite such a busy year as 1995'. John noted the main events that had gone ahead since the last AGM as: Southwell Apple Day, Pizza Party, Ceilidh, Jersey, Thaxted, Gate, Chipperfield, Saddleworth, Sutton Bonington plus a full season of pub tours and a few jointly with other local sides.

One event John forgot to mention was the annual trip to the Ripley Morris Men's Annual Ale Feast on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> January.



Only seventeen sides made it in 1996 but were treated to four real ales and Weston Cider. Golden Pea Soup plus a Lamb Dinner and Chocolate Cream Gateaux fed the inner man. Once more there was 'probably' a vegetarian option.



The annual Dolphin ceilidh went ahead in March and was a success making nearly £400 for funds. Usual venue and the first written reference to 'Wally Wailers Cetacian Band' so far discovered.



Jersey Morris Men held their Spring Ale during the long weekend of 24<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> May 1996 and Dolphin went along with Thames Valley Morris Men.

Photographs show that Dolphin's on parade included: Mike Wilkinson, Joe Oskiewicz, Dave Walters, John Sweeney, Steve Daniels, Chris Gigg, Ian Stewart, Ian Ambrose and one other, possibly Paul Geissler.

The programme shows that there was a get together with buffet at The 'Old Portelet Inn' on Friday night.



Saturday started with St Helier Precinct. Here the men can be seen itching to dance, with traditional hands in pockets in a show of pretend indifference.

Then onto Liberation Square outside the Tourism offices...



*Below: Mike and Joe blend in with the bronze statue in the Square*





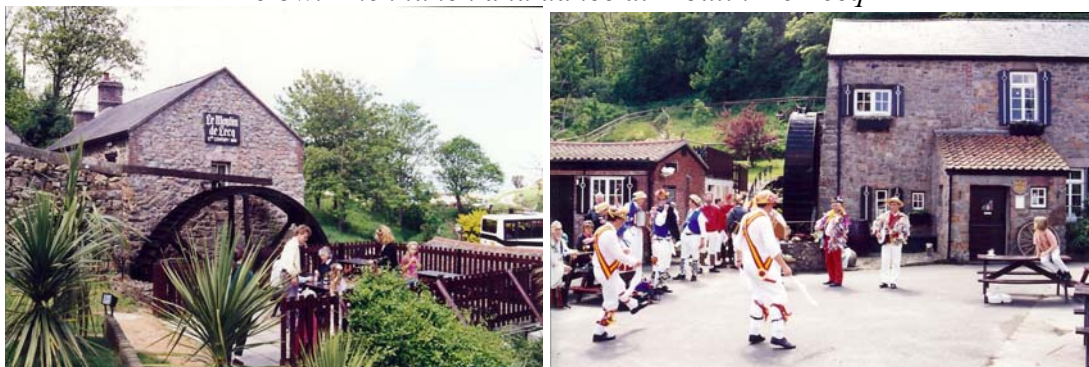
*Below: Mike made a complete fool of himself*



*Below: Then onto St Brelades Bay and the Boardwalk Café*



*Below: Then lunch and dance at Moulin De Lecq*



*Below: Then a trip to the zoo*







On Sunday there was more dancing during the day and in the evening a visit to a folk session at the 'Old Smuggler's Inn' where Joe and Mike danced their jigs.



Left: Joe performing his Shepherd's Hey Jig from the Wheatley tradition. At the AGM Mike commented that 'Joe, has carved a niche for himself with the Shepherd's Hey, which I believe started as a pastiche but has now become quite a party piece'. At the AGM John Sweeney thanked Joe for, 'entertaining us in Jersey with his new interpretation of an old jig'.

Right: Mike performing his mouthorgan jig to great effect. How does he play all those notes using only his tongue?



An overnight stay at the home of Helier man Dave Le Maistre followed on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> May. A trip to, and tour of, the Ann Street Brewery was fitted in before the men had to fly back to the UK.

No time to rest or unpack properly as the following weekend was Thaxted Ring Meeting.

No information or photographs have survived so far but a note from Ian Stewart at the AGM informs us that,

*'there's many a slip, and our slip came at Thaxted.'*

*We went on to do our show dance there with a bare side (I mean a side with just six men available), since one of our men was crocked up. It turned out that the musician we had borrowed could hardly stand on both feet, let alone play the tune for our dance...we did our best, but it wasn't great'*



Ian Stewart in a later flash of inspiration said, *'It brings back memories of us dancing to a musician who could hardly stand let alone play, and this musician was the late lamented Jim Catterall. Needless to say, I don't know for sure that this memory belongs to the 1996 meeting at Thaxted, but it's the only time I can definitely remember us dancing at Thaxted to a pissed up musician (everything being relative of course). Jim had been at the cider again. My memory is that we were dancing Headington Trunkles, and we had to keep adding and subtracting steps as Jim randomly added bits to the tune and took other bits out. I have a very vague recollection that Bert Cleaver may have saved the day by stepping up to the mike and taking over from Jim mid-way through the dance.'*



The Gate to Southwell on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> June 1996 was attended by the following sides:

Anstey Royal Chalfont	Broadstone MM
Micklebarrow MM	Dukes Dandy Clog
Oaks and Acorns	Aidleys Morris
Belvoir Morris	Clever Clogs
Ladybay Revellers	Greenwood Clog
Foresters MM	Calverton MM
Maids of Clifton	Mortimer's Morris
Nottingham Pride	Bakanalia
Black Pig	Stone Monkey



Chris Deuchar designed and produced the souvenir badge and would be responsible for the design and production of badges for subsequent 'Gates'.

The timings and format of the annual procession was now fairly well fixed but each facet of the day still had to be checked and sorted to ensure that everything flowed flawlessly for the visiting sides. Bob Hine and his team still had much work to do each year.



The above photographs take us from Nottingham Council House where Bob Hine and the Lord Mayor make their traditional speeches, through to Sneinton Environmental Society at Sneinton Community Centre.

Tom Huggan reads from the yearly 'Gate Scroll' and welcomes the dances and gives free passage through the area, and where a welcome cup of tea and sticky bun can be purchased to fortify the walkers.



Then onto The Cross Keys at Burton Joyce where all sides perform a show dance before moving on again.

*Below: Dolphin and Maids of Clifton dancing at The Cross Keys*



*Above: Ladybay Revellers head the procession as it arrives at The Ship Inn at Lowdham, and lunch.*



At the annual Greensleeves Morris weekend at Chipperfield, (always the second weekend in July), Dolphin were teamed up with Wath-upon-Dearne Morris Men and Greensleeves Morris Men for the Saturday tour, by vintage bus (Ex London Transport vehicles). So on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> July the following locations were visited by 'John Box's tour:

9.45am	Hemel Hempstead
11.00am	King's Arms, Hunton Bridge
12.00am	Fisheries, West Hyde
1.00pm	Merlin's Cave, Chalfont St Giles (dancing before and after lunch)
3.30pm	Bekonscot Model Village, Beaconsfield



After the evening feast there was more dancing at The Boot, Tower Hill followed by singing, dancing, and more eating and drinking at the hall in Chipperfield until well past midnight.



On Sunday morning after the outdoor church service the men take refreshments before processing to the Windmill, for more dancing, and lunch.

*Left: Here Jon Melville can be seen sporting his beard but not yet sporting the side's leather badge on his baldrick.*

At the AGM on September 19<sup>th</sup> 1996 it was revealed that funds were at a low ebb and Steve recommended the cessation of bag pints, *'unless in very special circumstances'*. £500 had been spent on new kit but an excellent ceilidh brought in over £350.

No bag pints was one thing but no kissing? It was felt that the practice of using physical violence to force the girl who was lifted in Brighton Camp to kiss all the men should stop. It made life easier of course because the need to pick a bit of a 'looker' was removed as well.

New blood was needed to swell the ranks of dancers and a number of initiatives were discussed, but it was agreed that trying to poach existing dancers from established teams was only ever going to be a short term fix. It was decided that taster sessions should be looked at to try to recruit, and that these should be nearer to Nottingham.

Dolphin held a weekend of dance based around Sutton Bonington during the weekend 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> October 1996.

Dave Walters recalls, *'The idea for the weekend had come from Saddleworth and they invited Earlsdon. In the end – and at the last minute Saddleworth pulled out!'*



*Above: Earlsdon Morris Men and Richmondshire Morris Men watch while Dolphin dance outside The Star at West Leake*





The programme for Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> October involved a coach tour calling at Loughborough, The Jolly Sailor at Hemington, The New Inn and Malt Shovel at Shardlow and The Star at West Leake.

At 4.00pm arriving at the Great Central Railway at Loughborough for dancing before a train ride to Leicester and more dancing while the train turned round, before returning to Loughborough.

The year end is a mystery with no records remaining, and there are no records of new people joining the side either. So more time to practice the entire repertoire but no new blood to supplement the aging group of Dolphin's.

## CHAPTER THIRTY

1997 – Romania here we come!



John Sweeney was the Squire of the side in 1997 and in his last AGM Squires report he pointed out that it was, *'Another great year!'* John went on to say, *'The pubs aren't all great, sometimes the people don't want to watch, the weather has been pretty terrible a lot of the time, but despite that I think we have had an excellent year with some really good pub sessions, excellent weekends at places like, Richmond and Chipperfield, and the usual quality Dolphin ceilidhs and Gate to Southwell, culminating in the experience of Romania!'*

John thanked the side for, *'six years as Squire (yes, it really is that long – it says so on the Squires tankard!)'*

In previous years an early event on the calendar was the Leicester Morris Men's Annual feast at Markfield where Dolphin almost always have a presence. The only proof that the side was there on the first Saturday in February is the folding feast menu, but it is often all that remains of what is always a good night with good home cooked food and a selection of good beers.

One month later on March 1<sup>st</sup> 1997 Dolphin were teaching the Morris at a workshop in West Bridgford. Chris Gigg says *'It started, if memory serves me well, with Joe saying that if we did something to do with dance, that Rushcliffe BC would pay for the hall and some band costs. We mentioned the Revs on the blurb because we had to have somewhere for interested females to go to learn more. The evening do was a barn dance, organised by us. We booked Bellows Scratchitt and Pluckitt but Rushcliffe paid for them. In the*



**MORRIS DAY**  
**Morris Dancing Workshop**  
 10am - 4pm  
 with The Dolphin Morrismen & The Lady Bay Revellers  
 &  
**Barn Dance**  
 7.30pm - 11.30pm  
 with Bellows, Scratchitt & Pluckitt  
 Try this typically English tradition with a workshop of dance steps and complete dances, plus music sessions for interested musicians. Then show your new skills at the evening barn dance!

**SATURDAY 1 MARCH**  
 at West Bridgford Community Hall,  
 Church Drive, West Bridgford

Tickets: Barn Dance £4 from West Bridgford Library,  
 Workshop £4 or combined Workshop/Barn Dance just £6.50  
 Available only from Rushcliffe Recreation Department  
 Tel: (0115) 981 9911 ext. 517

  
 Rushcliffe

*evening we got those who were at the workshop to dance the dance(s) they had learnt. It was fairly rewarding. We also sold tickets, as did Rushcliffe through the Footloose organisation they were running. We kept half the ticket money and so made about £100.*

John Sweeney gave a history of the Morris to those attending the day and in his Squire's report at the AGM John commented, *'The Morris instructional we ran for Rushcliffe was an interesting experience, even if it failed to get any new recruits – the*

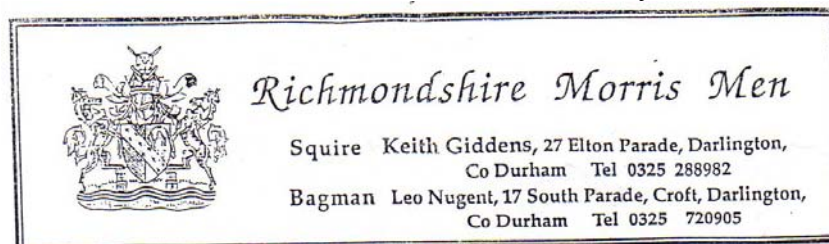


*pattern these days seems to be one of recruiting existing Morris Men who move into the area, rather than getting any real beginners – but don't stop trying – we could do with a few youngsters'.*

The regular Thursday night pub tours commenced on May 1<sup>st</sup> with visits to The Ship at Lowdham, and The Marquis of Granby at Hoveringham. Below is a group photograph taken at The Ship on May Day 1997.



At roughly two year intervals the Richmondshire Morris Men hold a weekend event and in 1997 it was the 8<sup>th</sup> Dale Ale held from 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> May and based in Richmond.



The Dolphin Men were there with a side. On Saturday, Tour two saw the men performing at; The Rose & Crown - Bainbridge, King's Arms – Askrigg, Bolton Arms – Redmire, Reeth for a mass show from both tours, and the Punchbowl – Low Row. On the Sunday there was a massed show in Richmond Market Place.

No photographs made the journey south but memories of the weekend include; From Dave Walters '*I'm pretty sure we were on tour two. I think this was the weekend when the photo was taken of everyone looking dog rough on the Saturday morning - I can remember us all having to drink coffee in the Askrigg pub (which is a lovely old stone place with low beams and a big smokey log fire). Maybe we looked dog rough at every Richmond weekend - those Saturday nights were the stuff of legends. Both tours met up at Reeth (they always do) but ate at different pubs. Hot pork pie with gravy, rings a bell.*

Mike Wilkinson recalls, *'this was a proper Morris weekend (either a Ring meeting or the unofficial equivalent). My memory is of the session in the pub on the evening. The landlord looked like David Jason. The chandeliers were wagon wheels with dimpled beer mugs over electric bulbs. Jim McCaffery went to use a beer tray as percussion on his head and smashed one of the beer mugs.*

*Foresters (Morris Men) were at the back end of the single long room. Ken Bramman was leading their singing, with all the usual slow stuff. We were at the front, and I led Dolphin and some other rebels in singing the choruses at half speed so that we were just ready to start the next chorus as Ken finished the next verse.*

*There were squaddies in the town and I remember some squaddies or youths jeering a bit through the open front window. Then one came in, got really "into it" and called to his mates to stop taking the piss and come in because it was great.*

*I think this might have been the weekend when Dolphin stayed in the Air Cadets hall. I remember there was a cut away side valve engine on display.*

The Friday night, ticket only, fish and chip suppers are also a feature of these weekends and memorable to anyone who has attended one.



The printed menu at the feast encourages, *'Eat, drink and be merry to your hearts content'* but includes the rider (*nee hoyin' of scan please*). A visit to the Babelfish translator on the web reveals this in fact means, *'The act of throwing food is discouraged'*.

Each Dolphin man was presented with a red plant pot that was meant to represent a fez that, on paper at least, was the side's official headgear. It was never actually taken into use but the Richmond men heard of this and each man was given his own 'hat'.

Above: *The archive example was presented by John Sweeney.*



The next main event on the calendar was the annual Thaxted Ring Meeting. Nothing remains to remind us of the great time that was had, not even memories.

The year was progressing nicely with the regular Thursday night tours keeping the men focused on their art.

There were performances at The Anchor and The Station Hotel Kegworth, finishing at The Kings Head, Sutton Bonington. This was Followed by a visit to Bradmore village, and the Packe Arms Hoton. The latter would be Bob Hine's tour finishing in his own village and within staggering distance of his house, he's not daft isn't Bob.

After Thaxted, Dolphin was invited to 'tour' with Black Pig Border Morris to the White Hart at Stanley Common and the Carpenters Arms at Dale Abbey.

Dolphin would see Black Pig again that very weekend at the Annual Gate to Southwell (Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June 1997). The souvenir badges are designed and made by Chris Deuchar an old Dolphin and now a Black Pig stalwart.



Below: *These images show the artwork for the souvenir 'Gate' badge and the actual finished badge.*



The route and organisation of the Gate is by now a matter of checking that nothing has altered on the route and sending out the invites to see how many teams will turn up on the day and then sorting out programmes, badges, buses, contacting landlords, caterers, the Police and the brewery for the anticipated sponsorship of a free pint for all participants, so quite simple really!!

Dance teams for 1997 included:

Aidleys Morris Dancers,	Green Velvet Outlaws,
Ladybay Revellers,	Nottingham Pride Clog Dancers,
Black Pig Border,	Foresters Morris Men,
Greenwood Clog,	Maids of Clifton,
Micklebarrow Morris Men,	Anstey Royal Chalfont,
Oaks and Acorns	Stone Monkey Rapper

plus representatives of  
Broadstone Morris Men and Calverton Morris Men.





After the Gate the pub tour season continued unabated but with nothing in the way of recorded memorable incidents except at The Ferry at Wilford when John Sweeney mentioned in his Squire's report,

*'I would like to report the fact that on Thursday the 12<sup>th</sup> of June 1997 outside the Ferry Inn in Wilford, at approximately 9.45pm, in the final chorus of Vandals of Hammerwich, JOE BROKE MY FINGER!'*

The second weekend in July arrived and with it a side of Dolphins descended upon the village of Chipperfield to join Greensleeves Morris Men for their annual weekend of dancing. Always a high spot of the year with great organisation, food, and a vintage bus in which to tour the dancing sites.



The transport for 1997 was an AEC Regent III, registration number KYY 877. First registered May 1950, Body No. B6029, Chassis No. 0961 3671 and LT Fleet No. RT 3148. It is restored as a 'country bus' in early 1960's livery.

*Information courtesy of Greensleeves.*



From Friday 11<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> July Dolphin Morris Men and Helmond Morris Men from Holland joined Greensleeves Morris Men and all toured in the one bus visiting:

10.00am	Chesham Town Centre, outside 'Boots'
10.45am	The Queens Head, Chesham
12.00pm	The Eagle, Old Amersham
1.00pm	The Merlin's Cave, Chalfont St Giles
3.30pm	Bekonscot Model Village, Beaconsfield



*Above Left and right: Chesham town centre*



*Above: Dolphin and Helmond with a joint Jenny Lind to their music and Dolphin's Fule near the Queen's Head, Chesham*

*Below: Mike displaying the art of jig dancing while Ian provides the music, using only the things they had to hand. Simple rustics indulging their pleasures*







*Above and right: A joint Vandalls of Hammerwich at The Eagle, Old Amersham*



*Above: Greensleeves outside Merlin's Cave, Chalfont St Giles*

*Below: A joint show dance after the open air church service at Chipperfield Green on Sunday morning.*





Below: Mike unicycles to the Windmill then does a dance to celebrate not falling off!



Some more dancing took place, then lunch and then the journey home, to normality. It was more of the same for Dolphin with three more Thursday night pub tours one in company with Ripley Morris Men in Bagthorpe and then a trip to Romania.

### Dolphin in Mediaş Romania August 1997



In August 1997 Dolphin Morris Men along with other teams from the UK went over to Romania for the "Festivalul Pe Mureş Şi Pe Târnave – Medias 1997". Mike has a theory, *'We were approached by an English woman, resident in West Hallam, called Celia. She invited us to a festival of dance to be held in Romania. She also invited Stone Monkey, a Welsh group, a Scottish group and an Irish group.'*

*When we got there, it turned out she had told the Romanians that she knew some British dancers who wanted to come over, and would they mind putting up some teams of their own. I got the impression she was inviting everyone to a festival that wouldn't have existed (or not on the same scale) if we hadn't gone to it'.*

Ten left Gatwick on 6<sup>th</sup> August headed for Otopeni Airport, Bucharest, the group consisting of; Ian Stewart and Hicky, Chris Gigg and Elaine, Mike Wilkinson, Steve Daniels, John Sweeney, Ian Ambrose, Nick Murphy and Joe Oskiewicz.



Above: At the airport and Waiting for the bus for Mediaş

Below: *Photo opportunity before the Mediaş show*



The programme states for August 9<sup>th</sup>,  
'18.00 Parade in costume in the centre of Mediaş, and dance short programme in front of the Town Hall in the Piaţa'.

The Dolphin contingent processed to the town hall with five musicians and five dancers: Ian Stewart on button accordion, Joe and Nick on melodeon's, Hicky on English concertina and Elaine on bodhran.

At all times carrying the 'ANGLIA DOLPHIN MORRIS' board, on a stick.

Photographs suggest that Dolphin danced British Grenadiers and The Toast at this spot.

The teams were billeted with local people in their homes being provided with varying degrees of hospitality. Mike being a vegetarian had a particularly difficult time of it and at one time had to make do with raw cabbage in vinegar, with dry bread! Not one to complain Mike persevered like a trooper and suffered the next day in silence, with only minor rectal bleeding to show for the ordeal!

As well as at Mediaş there was a show at Bazna on the open air stage near to the forest.





Above: *The procession to Bazna with the classic musicians dance a Dolphin delicacy  
Six men all playing a squeeze box and dancing to 'Speed the Plough'.*



Above: *The first and last appearance of 'SID' the beast of Dolphin. 'SID' was the  
inspiration of Steve Daniels and Steve made it as well as 'performed' in it.*

Mike Wilkinson recalls, *'I remember a procession up a badly made road..... Steve had brought his beast, SID. ("Steve Ian Daniels - see what he did there?)"*  
*Steve was actually very good indeed at beasting, clearly had a talent, and we encouraged him.*

*SID has never appeared since. We danced to a massive crowd. Dolphin got the biggest cheer of all - until the Romanian teams came on. Then the crowd cheered twice as loud. Either they were genuinely proud of their traditions, or terrified of the secret police'.*



Above: *Ilmington Constant Billy with the backdrop of the forest*



Left: *Give Mike anything long and thin and he'll balance it on his chin.*

Mike recalls, *'I remember a remote village, where we wandered around, admiring the narrow streets, the goat shit and the chickens. The only toilet facility was a hole in the floor in an unlit hovel. Steve fell into it, one leg up to the knee. [Fortunately no one took a photograph].*

There was a team of Scottish performers complete with their bagpipes, Ian Stewart asked, *"Could I hae a wee suck on ye're pipes?"*

Ian is able to play the pipes and Mike recalls, *'played like all the demons from Hell'.*



Above: *Ian 'ha'in' a blaw'*



Above: *Mike referees a fight between two of the men over Nick's stolen bell-pads! It was a right how do you do sir.'*



*'On the Monday night, we held an impromptu barn dance at the Medieval pub. It was Nick Murphy's birthday and he bought a drink for everyone in the pub which cost about £5!*

*We drank the pub out of beer. We were singing and playing. The police arrived at normal chucking out time. The locals became nervous and edgy and then someone got the bag pipes out, and that was too much, and the police flashed crocodile smiles and we got the message. The nearest British Embassy was a ten hour bus ride away, and the bus company was "under control".'*

A local radio station persuaded Dolphin to do something on the radio so Ian Ambrose in full kit danced a jig to Ian Stewart playing. Nick Murphy kept a tape recording of the radio programme for a long time afterwards but it was disposed of in a spring clean and now all we have is our imagination of what it must have been like!



*Above: we have the two Ian's dancing a 'Nutting Girl' double jig at the Bazna show*



*Left: the 'Diploma' of participation in the festival presented to all groups*

John Sweeney in his Squires report had this to say, *'...culminating in the experience of Romania. Despite various people's misgivings as the event approached and the planning deteriorated, despite the lousy journey, and despite the problems caused by certain organisers, I believe that everyone eventually settled in and had a great time. The Dolphin performances were brilliant, with Mike on top form playing to the tremendous crowds on Saturday and Sunday, and I sincerely believe that we were one of the stars of the festival – with a very professional presentation of interesting material. I also think we played a very significant part in the social aspects, leading most of the impromptu pub sessions, organising the dancing in the streets, and being the direct cause of the Police being called to the "Medieval" on the Monday night!'* And in relation to Steve Daniels, *'Your animal went great in Romania, Steve – please keep it up!'*

The main change at the AGM in October 1997 was a change of Squire to Chris Gigg; all other officers remained the same.

The year finished with regular practice on Thursday nights and the Christmas party night on December 22<sup>nd</sup> at *'Murphy Towers'* hosted by Nick and Barbara.

1998 would be the sides 30<sup>th</sup> year of dancing and a reunion was already in the planning stages.