TEAM NEWS

A feature of **AMM** dependent on your letters, postcards, and telephone calls. The names of correspondents appear at the end of each club's news.

**Ann Arbor Morris and Sword**

Ann Arbor Morris and Sword is doing very well these days. We had a large turnover last year, but now have a healthy number of dancers with an entire season's experience, and a very interesting assortment of people too! We had a very overextended summer season, which finally finished in October with the Michigan Renaissance Festival. Presently we are learning Bledington, the women are working up a mummers' play, and some of the men are learning a rapper. Hence--all of which we hope to be performing in January. For the future we would like to have our own (overdue) Ann Arbor Morris and Art Fair Ale during Ann Arbor's Art Fair. This would take place in the third or fourth weekend of July. More information will be available in the spring, but anyone interested should write:

**Yehudit Newman, 3437 Richard, Ann Arbor, MI 48104**

**Foggy Bottom Morris Men**

The Foggy Bottom Toe Tappers successfully survived their most ambitious year! The climax of the year was a two-week tour of southern England. The team danced with sides in London, Bristol, Bath, Worcester, Oxford, Shropshire and St. Albans, finishing in Henley (famous for Brakespeares Ales) for a Ring meeting. Highlights included tours with the unforgettable Shropshire Bedlams (you have to see them to believe them!), Martha Rhodies Tuppenny Diah (ed. This may be a poor transcription of the handwriting), and the Headington Quarry men. The side also took the opportunity to dance "Ring O' Bells" on the unsuspecting Kennedy Loveless' squireship badge. By pure coincidence (honest) the men hired exactly the same minibus as the Binghamton Morris Men did on their English tour several years back. The registration tags read: ALE---enough said!

Local events include the Matt Schwoller Memorial Walking Tour with the Bowery Boys and Binghamton. Other tours included a trip to Gregs Down-the-Hatch and dancing at the bicentennial celebration of the British surrender at Yorktown. Frankly, seeing all the tanks, warships, parachutes, etc. that were there, it's not surprising that the British gave up! The squire of FBMM is Greg Fabian, the bagman:

**John Appleton, #102, 10040 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852**

(Ed.: This address corrects an error in the April 1981 Directory issue of **AMM**.)

**Ha' Penny Morris**

A Ha' Penny first! --No one moved away this year! We were able to get right back to dancing and join in on some fall touring. The New Towne men were our guests for a Harvest Home, a weekend of dancing, singing, etc. in the Belmont area and Salem. For the snowy season we are looking forward to learning something new and will have a few surprises ready for spring. B.C. and Martha Roberts are our co-squires. Robin Cooper is bagman, Jan Atabas is foreman. In addition to two new dancers and one musician, originals BG and BB have returned.

**Barbara Canon, 238 Walden St., Cambridge, MA 02140**
Half-Moon Sword: New York City

Half-Moon Sword made its debut Saturday night, a month earlier than we'd planned. On Dec. 19th we danced the Ampleforth during the intermission of the Christmas Contra Dance in New York City. We walked single file into the dimly lit hall, to the strains of a wooden flute: swords on right shoulders, all on the same feet, black turtle necks and knickers, red sashes and the flash of red knee socks. We circled once and the music stopped. At the start of the next tune we put our swords up one at a time for the clash, and the dance began. Everyone was silent except for the music, the soft sounds of our feet, and the occasional clash of swords. We ended going into a moving circle, then making a turn in place to make the knot of swords which I held and then passed overhead (counterclockwise) to the persons behind me as we walked clockwise. I held it aloft one more time and then dropped it to the floor with a crash: we stepped quickly around the knot, clapped three times, grasped hilts, held them overhead, and drew swords. The music stopped, the applause was thunderous, and swords on right shoulders, we walked off in silence.

Maybe that's the difference between morris and sword dancing--morris dancing gets more exciting when there is a crowd--the crowd and the dancers "bounce off" each other. I've the suspicion sword dancing may not need an audience--it has a cumulative effect on the dancers, it mesmerizes. It may be just as well. I don't think urban audiences have an attention span of 11-13 minutes. We may have to catch them on their picnic blankets in Central Park.

(A recent dispatch from Deidre relates that Half-Moon Sword has started work on Papa Store from the Shetlands. It is danced by seven people, not six or eight, and has an interesting lock. The musician plays a sort of a drone in accompaniment.)

Delisle Ann Bisel y Padin (also of Ring O' Bells)

Kingsessing Morris Men: Philadelphia, PA

Kingsessing is alive and well and continuing regular practices. Our planning for the spring is just beginning and we are looking forward to lots of dance. Our first Annual General Meeting is to be held January 24th at Bearpuff's house with the hope that the business will end before the keg. Gary Undercuffler remains squire/foreman.

Tom Senior, Ragnam. 2729 N. 45th St., Philadelphia, PA 19131.

Mason-Dixon Border Morris: Clearville, PA

In the time-flies-when-you're-having-fun department: We've been together for over a year now and getting knee-deep into those morris traditions from the Welsh border marshes. We hope to have "Maiden's Prayer" (subtitle "Wanker's Reel") ready for exhibition in the spring.

How about a contest for morris dancing similar to the Playboy "Jazz Poll"? (Nomination for the cleverest name for a morris team: Mason-Dixon Border Morris.) By the way, we recommend Rustoleum to prime those rapped swords and longswords, especially for teams dancing out in wet, snowy, midwestern climates.

With regard to those British teams which are planning to come over--don't believe it! Morris dancing died out in England at the turn of the century!

Larry Shute, Rt. 1 Box 63, Clearville, PA 15535

Minnesota Traditional Morris: Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN

The fourth quarter of 1981 provided a welcome rest for MTM. Approximately half the team went on extended leave from practice while the other half worked up the North Skeleton longsword dance with the help of Pat Talbot from Chicago. It was presented in the context of a brief mummers play at our annual soirée for the homeless, the vitialed, the curious and the dubious at the Minneapolis Public Library. Honorable mention goes to musician Todd Norton who powered the whole show on his tenor sax. The men went on the road with it thereafter, down the block to Butler Square who terminated this vital part of their Christmas show last year. It has gone on ever since to the cheers of the Christmas crowd.
Rehearsals resumed January 5th and we plan to dance for fun only for several weeks before beginning our apprentice class. Undoubtedly it was some of the best dancing of 1982, as is often the case after an extended rest. On January 9th, as the mercury dove for -28° F. and the wind screamed at 40 m.p.h., the winter met the beginning of its end at the annual Twelfth Night party hosted by former squire Arthur Knowles. Tradition has it that the season will not abate unless the floorboards in Arthur’s dining room resonate at least an inch and a half under the burden of the morris.

We look forward to a quieter year in 1983 with fewer “big show” gigs and more spontaneous touring, especially into the abode of our sponsoring pub, the Gluek Brewing Co. Frank Hall of Bloomington, IN will be up to do some workshops in morris and Northwest clog dancing in early February. We will travel to Madison, WI for the second annual Wisconsin Morris Ale Day and may attempt to meet up with the touring English teams late this summer.

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

New Men’s Team: Richmond, VA

It’s taken almost a year to get some men interested here in Richmond in forming a side. Fortunately, with the Albemarle Morris Men relatively near, morris dancing is not completely unknown. There is also a female group dancing in Richmond. We began practicing last week and hope to be the Richmond Morris Men.

Guy A. Maclean-Eltham, 609c Tilden St., Richmond, VA 23221

Ring O’ Bells: New York City

Ring O’ Bells Reminders:

1. For every dance there should be a side of dancers and a musician.
2. When the music stops the dancers should stop. Conversely, when the dancers stop the music should stop.
3. Someone should call the dance.
4. Whoever does call should call only the figures of the tradition the dancers are doing.
5. Sticks strike sticks, not fingers.
6. After a jump one should land on one, or two, feet—preferably your own.
7. Use hankies for hanky dances, sticks for stick dances.
8. Dancers should do the figures called.
9. Six dancers should line up in two lines before the dance begins. (Exceptions have been noted when men are seen dancing in red vests and white pants.)
10. If you get hurt, make it dramatic—the crowd likes drama.
11. Musicians should play the tune from the tradition the dancers are performing.
12. Remember the dreaded Adderbury hey—it’s different from all the rest.
13. At some point during a caper there should be space between the dancers’ feet and the ground.
14. The audience should be able to tell who is dancing in the set and who is fooling.
15. Dancers should wear bells and make them ring whenever possible.
16. Musicians should not wear bells. If they want to make noise they should use their instruments.

Rob Morris is proud to announce the “Bell of the Month” contest. Anyone wishing to vote for their favorite bell may cast their vote by mail. Results in the next ANM.

Diane Harweiler, 74 River Rd., Cos Cob, CT 06807
Rock Creek Morris: Washington, D.C.

Greetings from Rock Creek Morris in Washington, D.C. This Autumn has been replete with many a morris frolick of one kind or another! We danced at the Renaissance Fair in Columbia, MD three times. At the Bluegrass Town Fair and the Charleston Fall Festival. We did a lot of Headington and Adderbury, and in the coming months we're going to work on Bucknell in addition to polishing what we already know. We also plan to have a ceremonial beast—a 'hoss' of some kind—to join our forces. Mary Ellsworth is squire, Mary Chor. Turman. Amy Barnett, bag-woman, and Nancy Taylor, assistant bag. (Eds.: The information you requested is included in this issue.)

Nancy Taylor. 4120 N. 34th Rd., Arlington, VA 22207

Westerly Morris Men: Westerly, RI (Condensed from the Westerly Morris Newsletter.)

The Westerly men continued to dance a busy performing schedule through November and December in addition to functioning as the touring agent for English teams planning tours of the Northeastern United States next summer. Performances included a mummers' play, a German "schuhplatter", and the Abbots Bromley Horn Processional. They held forth Dec. 4th at the Ledyard Historical Society, Dec. 12-13 in a "small version of the New York City and Boston (Christmas) Revels" along with Mystic Garland morris and others. A Twelfth Night celebration was held Jan. 9 and 10. On Dec. 8th the Westerly fellows held their annual meeting.

Preparations for the English tour during the late summer continue apace. The Saddleworth team has decided not to come along, but Bangton sent notice that they plan to arrive in New York City on July 28th. Twenty people will be coming with them including members of Bangton's, country dance band. The Bushmen. (Eds.: 1) George Utter and company have been coordinating planning among the participating teams who are in turn planning the parts of the tour in their local areas. Ha Penny, Ring O' Bells, and Hearts of Oak have appeared in this capacity in the Westerly Newsletter. It is quite possible that Minnesota Traditional Morris will travel east to meet the tour. Those interested in details should contact Westerly by writing:

George Utter, Bagman, 54 Elm St., Westerly, RI 02891

Letters

From Two Teams in Southern Yorkshire.

Greetings and help! I am the dance instructor of a morris team based around the Wakefield area of Yorkshire. Next summer, early August 1982, it is hoped that my team—Horberie Shrogys, with its complimentary women's team, Wakefield Ring O' Bells, plus another team, Grimsby Morris, will be making a tour of the Northeast states. I have had some contact with the Westerly Morris owing to their visit to England in 1980 and it is hoped to spend some time with them owing our visit, but are there any other teams in that New England patch who would be willing to put us up for a stay and help us with organizing public displays. transport, accommodation, etc.

What we are offering is: three teams doing Cotswold, Border, Longsword and northwest morris, two dance bands, one English style, one Irish style, with dance callers, some solo clog step dancers, solo morris jig dancers, individual musicians and singers. Instructors who can give teaching sessions on various forms of the morris, and much more. The only drawback is numbers. There is likely to be around 70 of us! Would it be possible for you to put this letter in the AMN in the hope of offers of help?

We want to avoid travelling too much as we have a low budget, but we want to meet as many American teams as possible. The provisional dates for the tour are July 31st 'til Aug. 14th, 1982. Are there any folk festivals or camps who could do with a group of morris tourists to perform for them? Hope to see you soon!
During a summer in the mid-60's, I saw a team of English morris dancers at the University of Wisconsin in Madison and I would like to find out who they were. They were touring through the U.S. dancing in various places, and may have been from an English university. They danced both morris and longsword, the morris with slings rather than handkerchieves. I remember the kit as red and black: they wore bowler hats with plastic flowers around the bands, and white gloves. I'd appreciate hearing from anyone who saw the team, or has any information about them.

Mary Eileen Johnson
P.O. Box 9028, Elmwood Station
Berkeley, CA 94705

A Note of Condolence

Just after Vol. V No. 3 of AMN went to press we received word of the death of Joel Robinson, musician for Hearts of Oak Morris in Binghamton, N.Y., in an automobile accident. Five other members of the team were injured in the accident but were treated and released.

Joel was 26 years old and played for the morris as well as for the High String Strings. We remembered him from our first trip to the Marlboro Ale in 1979. AMN sends its support to Joel's friends in Binghamton, and we wish them a particularly strong year in celebration of what Joel helped them build at Hearts of Oak.

The Editors

Announcements

Pinewoods Camp has written us to announce that some jobs are available for the camp season from mid-June through early September. There will be some participation in the program. The following positions are available: Head Cook, Assistant Cooks, Kitchen Aids, Pot Washers, Grounds Crew and bookkeeper. For details write to Jacqueline Schwab, 15 Spalding St. #3, Jamaica Plain, MA. 02130.

The April issue of AMN will once again carry the annual directory of morris teams in North America and a schedule of morris events through the summer for the convenience of those who will be travelling and looking for other teams. We expect to drop teams from the existing directory that we haven't heard from for a while so if your team falls into this category please be especially certain to notify us of your whereabouts if you wish to appear. Word continually filters our way in a rumoresque fashion about new teams that are just starting up or old teams no one has heard of before. It is our policy to trace these leads assiduously in order to present the most complete picture possible of morris in North America. For this reason we are especially in need of our readers' assistance in updating information on your teams, including the name of the team, the name and address of a contact person, and any performances you have scheduled during 1982. Phone numbers are also helpful if your are inclined to give them. Thanks for your help!

The copy deadline for our April, 1982 issue, Vol. VI No. 1, will be March 31, 1982.
In the back of a small New England pub with a sea-faring theme, a hundred or so morris dancers mill about between sets. Already today we have seen a birthday jig where the dancer graciously took a pie in the face for every turn out into a new figure of the dance. Another six-pack demolished a six-pack in the course of a dance. Now four men are striding forward, long sticks erect in the posture of an Adderbury dance, announcing with twinkling eyes, ‘The Blue Bells of Scotland’. The four are set and the music is well along in a ‘once to yourself’ when two more in knickers step out of the crowd and join at the bottom to complete the obviously ailing set. In the last half-measure momentarily looks of fright pass over the faces of the four—then a certain glee just as they step off—‘O where and O where has my Highland lassie gone?’ ... Crash. Foot up, and back. Foot up, and back. Suddenly the first apprentice shouts, ‘Half-hands!’ and the newcomers form the figure, but their mouths are soon apace as they find themselves forming a T formation with the rest of the set. The second apprentice works out, ‘Processional down’ and to their astonishment the pair watch as the middle couple go up the set—up the set they thought they were dancing. Unfortunately, at the last moment they had stepped into a four-man set with a rotating squire.

In its first six or seven years the Minnesota Traditional Morris could only accept offers to perform with great anxiety. It frequently meant that they would arrive at a gig shorthanded and have to hum the music as they absorbed the musician for a fifth or a sixth dancer. In order to remedy the situation the squire often spent an entire evening trying to hunt or scare up additional warm bodies over the phone. Tiring of this, at one evening’s rehearsal they decided to take some positive action and invent something they could use when shorthanded. The result was the four-person set with a rotating squire.

The basic principle is easily stated. The dance begins as usual with the squire calling the first figure from the first master position. Then with each succeeding figure, the axis of the set turns clockwise 90° so that the squireship rotates. Therefore the first apprentice calls the second figure and the set dances on an axis 90° to the right of the first figure axis. On the third figure they dance “down” relative to the original direction with the second apprentice calling the figure. Choruses also maintain the rotation, which makes a stick dance a thrilling occasion.

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Heys are done by the Minnesota Men in one of two ways. Regular whole and half heys are simply danced just as if the middle dancers were there: the two dancers on each side of the set perform the usual first and third positions in a morris hey. The other possibility would be to collapse the square into a diagonal hey-for-four which Minnesota uses in place of the “country dance hey”.

1. and 3. pass right shoulders as do 2. and 4. until all fall into a diagonal line. With practice a set can move right into the hey without falling in along the diagonal first. This adds a bit of momentary pandemonium which keeps the audience guessing and heightens the effect of successfully getting through the hey. This hey should bring each dancer back to his/her accustomed place at the usual time.
Because this idea is most easily adapted to traditions where the pattern figures is relatively set, Minnesota has used it chiefly with stick dances from Adderbury. The typical Adderbury pattern is as follows, where arrows indicate axis of the set:

- Foot-up
- Half-hands
- Processional down or top-star
- Processional up or bottom star
- Dance around
- Country dance hay

(CAUTION: It should be noted here that axis/direction of the set. Thus in processional down/top star, where the axis (head) of the set has been reversed, the figure proceeds "down" the realigned set or "up" relative to the original orientation of the set.)

Recently this scheme was successfully adapted to handkerchief dances from several traditions, especially Bledington.