Opening Comments

The editors of AMM have been working diligently to catch up on the backlog of correspondence, computerize the entire subscription base and mailing list, and produce the summer issue on time. I think we managed to do it all.

This issue of the Newsletter contains two very useful articles for the average mida who organizes events. The first, by Josephine Reynolds, is a summary of the various ways groups have organized days around the country. The second, by John Mayberry, describes Topeka Morris Men's organization when they dance in public. Kelly Leiths once again grace us with her wit and humor in the on-going cartoon series "The Moon in Mortmainfield." Team News follows as always.

Next issue starts a series of historical articles on Conswold Morris. P.A.M. Borys will be the author on that topic.

Enjoy the issue and the rest of the summer.
In AMN’s tradition of inviting a morris artist to design a cow for the summer issue, Brian Whiting of Oak Apple Morris in Madison, Wisconsin presents this year’s masterpiece. Brian writes for a bio:

My involvement with morris goes back to 1890. In 1906, I supplied Cecil Sharp with a number of dances and songs. In this country, I’ve been actively dancing morris for nine years with Prairie Waves in Nebraska and Oak Apple in Madison.

His also sent an explanation about the source of inspiration to design the piece. It is an excerpt from The Complete History of Virtuosity Everywhere, Simon and Peabody, 1952:

As to the origin of Morris dancing, an interesting theory comes from central Georgesville and is substantiated by a thirteenth-century (1250-1330) manuscript and hornbook known as Simon’s Manuscript. Simon was polishing in preparation for next day’s dedication that was dropped upon his foot. Greatly distressed, Simon pointed to his injured appendage and yelled “boots!” He then releasing the bell “up”. Upon being released, he yelled and hopped about as such a mannerisms greatly amused onlookers. It is not that a sick dance was performed by Simon there but included the morris apprentices.

Thank you to Brian for his research and artwork.

Have you noticed that the envelope that contains this issue of AMN was no longer hand addressed? Some may consider this a deterioration of service; however, this editor has been dreaming of this day when a computerized mailing list and subscription database could be established. Yet... it’s done. In theory, it will save me time in getting an issue ready for distribution.

As with any computerizing effort, the transition usually has a few bugs in it. If your name has been inadvertently compiled, or if you have been placed on a side you never heard of or haven’t danced with in ten years, let me know and I will fix it for you. Politeness and patience are still virtues in the world and need to be practiced regularly around volunteer organizations.
Dear AMH:

I was greatly saddened to read of the death of Morris Sundinard. He was an important contributor to the repertory of Morris dancing, not so much as a scholar but as a Keeper of the Dance. You might point out that, whatever his thoughts about the directions in which the dance was going, he was motivated always by a deep love for it and its roots. Morris was one of the only people I knew who could comprehend the dance's descent from ritual without romanticizing it into a modern mystical rite.

It's said that first impressions are hard to overcome, so I think it's a shame that many American dancers were not that thrilled with Morris; to those who did not get to know him, his manner could be off-putting, which might make it hard to understand why, for example, he was opposed to women dancing Morris in public.

My own first impressions of Morris Sundinard were overwhelmingly positive, as they were of a previous fool and a gaunt and matronly bore. It was on my first visit to England in 1971, with the help of the late Ewart Russell, then Beggar of the King, I was attending the Westminster Morris Men's Day of Dance. As a lone, unattached dancer, I was more or less hugging along until the teams came together at the Broad Sanctuary in front of Westminster Abbey. Morris introduced himself and the Offray team, and saw to it that I got into as many sets dances as possible. (At one point, in his food's person, he even paraded me around the area to show off the "American Morris Men" to the crowd; some I was the first American team dancer to come over and actually dance in kit.)

A few weeks later, I was at Hampton on Spring Bank Holiday, wondering how the hell I was going to get to Huntingdon for the evening tour; as I had left my bike in London and the buses were on a limited holiday schedule, I was surprised it seemed inevitable that Morris and Barbara should be there to give me a ride.

During 1974-75, when I was in England for a port of Morris-dance total immersion, I had many chances to both Morris with Morris (sorry, but it can't be avoided forever) I came, as you did, to understand the depth of his commitment, and while I disagreed about the place of women in the scheme of things, it did not affect our friendship. He was not a vindictive man, and as much as he disliked seeing women in the dance, he deplored the behavior of the more infantile male dancers of the time, some of whose runnings got into the pages of English Dance and Stage.
I just saw Morris in 1979 at the Pinewoods Morris Men's Fall Tour. It's a good way to remember him, in fall. Off in foot's regular, on a sunny afternoon, directing, ordering, urging, looking and important, but somehow making sure that the attention of the audience was always, always on the dance.

I'm sorry he's gone. It won't be quite as much fun without him.

Yours, Martin "Shag" Gratz, 49 Saw St, Acton MA 01720

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Dear AMN:

In reading all those amusing articles, I am moved to wonder whether there is any connection between numbing and the slate that is so often a part of the Saturday night program at Alte. Thanks to our unaccountably talented performers, Mary Chir, we have created some dynamic slate. One featuring person-sized dancing hankies; our current hit is Swan Lake Morris...

Yours, Martha Haynes, 116 Lee Ave, #514, Takoma Park, MD 20912

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Dear AMN:

As a part of a three-weekend series of programs commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Country Dance and Song Society, a morris set was held at the Smithsonian on the weekend of April 21-22. Performances, workshops, and a small exhibition were cosponsored by the National Museum of American History and CDSB, with the active cooperation from the CDSB-affiliated groups in the D.C. area. Over 150 dancers attended the set, from the following areas from the mid-Atlantic region: Allegheny Morris Men, Asthagrow Garland, Ballinore, Black-eyed Suze, Bridget Morris, Peggy Bottom Morris Men, Greensfield Morris Men, Millstone River Morris Men, Morris Men, Rock Creek Morris Woman, Sandyhook Longsword, Scréwood Morris, and Teeswater Pepper. (See also news at the National Museum of American History and on various listings in the National bed.)

On Saturday morning there was a seminar about morris dancing in America, with a panel comprised of Tony Barrand, David Foster, Alan Morrison, and David Sharp. The panists talked about their involvement in and contribution to morris.
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dancing in America, and Tony showed video tapes from past Marlboro Ass. In the afternoon, Jim Morrison was master of ceremonies for performances by each team, with superb demonstrations of Cotswold, hornwood, reaper and garland dances. Fans on Saturday put an end to mass dancing and tours outside the museum, but a number of indoor locations gave museum visitors something a little different from the normal museum experience. On Saturday night the museum hosted a dinner and country dance for visiting teams. Sunday was Earth Day and the sun came out, so there were many thousands of people on the Mall. Morris dancers provided a welcome distraction from the Hollywood types entertaining at the Capitol. Rock Creek did a wonderful job of logistics for tours and also prepared lunches for both days.

Additional events included concerts by Tony Barrand and John Roberts highlighting Cecil Sharp’s contributions to the preservation of English folk dances and song. An exhibition called “The Legacy of Cecil Sharp: Country Dance and Sing in America” was mounted at the Museum and CSSS, focusing on Sharp’s work in England and America. The exhibition, open to the public from mid-April through June, included a section on ritual dance, displaying photos, instruments, and books on morris and sword. Exhibits made by CSSS members and groups were also featured, including beautiful banners from Mystic Garland and King O’Bella.

On the weekend following the Ass, there were more ritual dances in the presentation by the Washington Revels called “Bringing in the May” that featured morris dancing by Rock Creek, Peggy Bottom, and a girl’s team from Arlington, Virginia, a procession led by the Fiddler Hobby Nose, and a Maypole. These events and the exhibition were viewed by thousands of fascinated Smithsonian visitors from all over the country, most of whom, we can assume, had never seen anything like it. The most commonly asked question was, “What religion are these people, anyway?”

If anyone wants further information, write to me at HMAH/MB06, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C. 20560.

Best wishes, Howard Nave, Program Coordinator.
JOHN: This idea is very tricky, involving the use of a simple device.

EVE: But my device is not a simple device.

JOHN: I will now demonstrate the effectiveness of your device.

EVE: And what about the other device?

JOHN: Actually, there are two devices. One is simple and the other is complex.
THE BREWING OF A MOREB ALF,
or, MORRIS ALF Production for the Complex Intellect

B,ocyn Reynolds
(In 1987, Bocyn Reynolds [no author] and Sheila P. Fitzgerald of Berkeley, Morris [another the first California Morris Alf].)

This is meant for people who have never put on an alf, and are considering doing so, and for people who have, but are interested in alternative ways and means. It is a nuts-and-bolts look at how various teams have put on their alf, what worked and what didn’t. I have asked Tony Barrand, founder of the Marlboro Morris Alf, to write an introduction to this, about his philosophy on Morris Alf.

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Marlboro Morris Alf:
A Brief History

Dr. Anthony C. Barrand
Squire, Marlboro Morris & Sword 1974-1984

There were two impetus behind my urge to hold the first Marlboro Morris Alf in 1975. One was a desire to bring American teams together in a contest where everyone’s dancing would be at its best. I’m an old rugby “lock”, and the competitive possibilities for improvement when dancers are doing their stuff for other dancers are, as they say, “just nuts to me.” The second impulsion was largely historical but still part of my wish to establish Morris dancing as a local tradition. In the original 1753 charter of Marlboro, VT, it states that when the town has 40 families, the king gives them permission to hold a fair beginning on the last Monday in May. Often called “Alf” because of the special brew created for the occasion, such communal gatherings were a crucial part of 19th century English life and many such were initiated and some still maintained in Vermont. In the Cotswolds in the early 19th century, Morris dance teams had competed for the right to perform at, thereby, collect money by selling “tapers” (candles) at the larger als.

Much to the surprise and culture shock of this Englishman, American Morris dancers did not respond well to the suggestion that we have a competition, with the traditional prizes of a cake and blue ribbons (hence the expression that someone good “easily takes the cake”). Some told me they would not come if
there was a competition, others assured me with great authority that Morris dancing had never been a competitive activity. I resolved to pursue my mother's agenda more wisely, though perhaps not much more wisely. The first year with open invitations to all existing teams, we had 12 groups and 28 for the next two years. After that we had to evolve a system for restricting the numbers so that teams could get enough dancing done during the weekend. Following my aesthetic, we issued invitations to a selection from strong teams dancing Cotswold Morris with men's and/or women's sets which had existed for at least two years. There was always a strong preference for teams performing a single "tradition." We tried to keep a balance between the range of repertoire, older teams, and newer teams. Travelling on concert tours, I used to see and do workshops for a lot of new groups. Room was always made for teams from a long distance who wanted to come.

Feeling the need as M.C. in my role as "Mother" to have a little variety at massed shows, we would invite a sword team and a North-West group when such developed, but the main thread for many years was to put together as fine a display of Cotswold Morris as could be seen in North America. After I retired and the Marlboro Women went to England in 1987, the pattern changed somewhat, moving more towards a sort of amalgamation in which teams were invited to represent a broader range of types of dance although Cotswold-style repertoire is still the dominant genre. This year, 1990, was the 15th Marlboro Morris Ale.

James Brickwedde, AMF's editor, asked me to write this after hearing me complain bitterly that there was no "Morris Ale Protection for the Competent Ale Master." I had gotten myself into a position of being an Ale Master, and then had to wing it from there. How is it done? How much structure should it have, and how should it be budgeted? And how on earth do you know how much beer to provide? California had never had a Morris Ale before, and Berkeley Morris was not yet very widely-traveled. With two "Killer" Ales under my belt, I had as much or more Ale experience than anyone on the team except our Engineer, and he knew better than to get involved.

Now, three years after Berkeley's Malt & Malted Ale, I am far more widely traveled and a bit less naive. Based on the information I solicited from various Ale Masters, and filling in some of the gaps with my own experiences, I am offering up a compendium of possibilities. Every report of an Ale from.
who gets invited to how transportation is arranged, can be handled in a wide variety of ways, and I have summarized some of these.

This is a good place to cite my sources, and extend my heart-felt thanks to the people listed below at the same time. I developed a questionnaire to solicit information about acts that I thought would be representative of the various types found in the U.S., for unlisted issues of either gender, man-only, woman-only, and named, regular weekend acts, and holiday weekend acts. My responses were from Audrey Berrada, Marboro Morris & Sword, The Alderford Morris At C Jhay Hudson, Sussex Morris, The Shadwell Cmgt, John Dexte, The Bewdley Boys, The Pyewacket (Staff) Sheila Fitzgerald and Jos callers McCallaus, Berkeley Morris, The Kettle Adm, Alex Han Smith, Moneyback Morris Men, The Kettle At Sally Agard, Penney Morris, The Albion and Steve Windgard, Marboro Bull, The Alderford Morris At C Jhay Hudson, Sussex Morris & Sword, The Pyewacket offered to fill out a questionnaire when she heard about the project at the last minute, so I have included her answers in some cases, all of her answers as exactly as I was able. Many thanks to all of these people. My thanks also to the artists who allowed me to reproduce their posters here. It seemed appropriate to give examples of some of the ways the Morris can be advertised to the public.

The questionnaire asked a broad range of questions, and I got an equally broad range of answers to each individual question. The respondents gave me some very interesting feedback on their solutions, and, sometimes, they told me why they used them. In some cases these interpretations of my questions were quite fascinating.

There were some questions I asked which I later found were not particularly relevant, and others which I did not ask and really wish I had. One of these is whether non-dancers ("guests") encouraged, discouraged, or forbade? Where the answer to that one showed up, or where I noticed what might have been the answer, I have included it.

I began by asking why teams put on an act. Aria responded that Marboro was instituted "to perpetuate good Morris dancing, to celebrate spring, and to share ideas." Marboro is 15 years old this year. Also responded that the Bewdley enjoy the men's format. The Sads is 11 years old. Sally said they wanted to do something for the women, since the men had the Sads. The other respondent indicated a feeling that it would be a good thing for their team, an appropriate thing to do, and a good occasion for a party: an affirmation of ourselves as a community.
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Summary of some aspects of the die.

Definitions:

Show dye: generally, a stop where all dancers congregate, at the beginning or end of the day, and usually each team performs once. This is when teams tend to bring out their best dance. Periodically, a mass dance may occur. (The rest of the day, dies split up into from two to six training groups.)

Show dye: Friday, Saturday, Sunday.

Long dye: Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Monday.

Open dye: single-dye or mixed teams may attend.

Good Eean Slope hospitals and the like. This appears to be a West Coast expression for a West Coast phenomenon.

Berkeley Morris (1987): open short dye, part of a rotating annual event, the Californian, people put up at a campus. 115 people attended, we neither encouraged nor discouraged guest, four stops to take advantage of the beauty of San Francisco Bay Area, including parks, the SF-Sausalito Ferry, Children's Fairyland, stopping centers of various sorts, and good turns dances. Show dye stood at the SF Marina Green. Transportation was by hired bus, the split into 2 hours.

Beaver Boys (1989): men-only short dye, once-as-year annual event, people put up at a "rustic" campsite, about 100 dancers attended, with guest discouraged, tour stops were in beautiful towns. Transportation was by hired bus.

Ho'Penny (1989): women-only short dye, annual event, people put up at dancers' houses in Boston (Huppy said that the dancers spend so much time together that being split up at night doesn't affect the community spirit). 50-60 people attend, and I didn't notice guest, four stops in very public places throughout Boston, including shopping areas, and at the USS Constitution, which attracts tourists as it is part of the Freedom Trail walk. Show dance stops at Government Center and the Boston Common. Originally this site took place at Western Massachusetts, based on a campsite. It was felt that since Ho'Penny or a city team, they should have a city site, and they have been happy with the results of the switch. Transportation was by public transit, personal cars, walking, dye split into 3 hours.

Marlboro: single-sex team, long dye, annual event, people put up at Marlboro College, with a choice between campus and an existing home (for an extra fee), 250 dancers, 80 guests attended in 1988, stops on Saturday began with the show dancing at Marlboro College, then there was a walking tour of the grounds of...
Mourning Belle (1988): open short ale, part of an annual event, the Midwest Morriss Ale, which rotates between five cities; people put up at a summer camp in the mountains. 171 people attended; transportation was by hired bus. Mayfield (1989): open short ale, part of the California Ale cycle; people put up in a campsite with dinner, at least 100 attended; show dance placed at a park with large swimming bowl; transportation was by hired bus, ale split into 3 hours. Moxbybecks (1987): open short ale, a more-off-lesser annual, penultimate rotating event; people put up at a very rural campsite (actually somebody’s field), 100 people attended last time; tour stops include good karmic stops, a winery or brewery, show dance at the ocean. Sunday there is dancing at the ferry, and “gong” (unplanned dancing done without permission: hat-and-run) dancing in Seattle, at or near a more-off-lesser friendly pub. Transportation was by hired bus. Rummet (1988): open short ale, bi-annual event; people put up in park with choice of camping or staying in hotel rooms; about 175 people attended; tour stops included good karmic stops, a pub stop, a lunch stop, and two special stops, one of which had to be by the ocean. Show dance done by the ocean. Transportation was by hired bus, ale split into 3 hours.

Jay doesn’t consider The Duck to be part of The California Ale rotation, but facts suggest otherwise: Northern California puts on an ale every other year. Rummet puts on an ale every other year. Rummet dies happen on years when Northern California also don’t. 

Organizational Structure:

This seems to be done in every way possible, from benevolent dictatorships through oligarchy to ale-by-committee. Nobody indicated to me that their method didn’t work, but one respondent suggested that the two ale masters would have appreciated more help from their terms. Most terms seem to set some sort of organizational timeline which is not terribly formal, and said they were able to keep to it for the most part.
The 14th Annual

**Marlboro Morris Ale**

May 27 & 28, 1989

*Morris Dancing on your streets!*

**Saturday, May 27 — Marlborough**

1 p.m. - 4 p.m. Continuous dancing
   at the following locations
   - Town Hall Park
   - High School Library
   - 3rd Street Street
   - 4th Street

4:30 p.m. Mixed Show Dance

*Elliot Street*

**Sunday, May 28 — Wincham County**

*Foster set by Bob Danceet. T-shirt was based on the poster design.*
I school if, while the teams were out on tour, they were able to keep to schedules, and if not, why not. Berkeley found that we had terrible problems because we didn't budget an adequate amount of time to compensate for the slowness of the buses, and the bus company didn't tell us that, a) the school buses move more slowly with adults aboard, and b) that the buses would have a hard time getting up the hill from our campus to the main road. The key here seems to be to budget about twice as much time as you think you'll need between tour stops. Slowness of buses coupled with the inertism of tired morris dancers makes things very slow.

Sheila (Berkeley) said, when talking to the bus company, "be sure to emphasize time schedule and adult weight." John (Sowwee) feels, so do I, that buses are ideal so that the [schedule] may suffer without fear of having to drive. The extra benefit is that the buses provide another venue for outrage and togetherness, which is not available to [schedule] driving individually." John also emphasized that 'the schedule must be given a great deal of thought'. In my view, if the men are late for the next stand, the blame rests on the shoulders of the organiser. The men will be late if given a chance, that is the nature of the Morris, and the nature of a herd of men." [Actual women] "Our scheduling is successful because once the men realize that they should in fact move on, the time is exactly right for so to do. (And there is nothing more frustrating on tour than to have to leave an excellent situation before it has had a chance to run its course... There is nothing worse than feeling either late all day or pushed all day".

Andra (Marboro) said that "the tour managers are given dire warnings" about sticking to their schedules. They are pretty successful. One of the nice things about the Marboro walking tour is that they do not need to herd people on and off buses all day. Steve (Macon), Stacy (Hi Pency), and Joy (Sunset) said their also stayed on schedule, Ken (Montyhawk) and there were only minor problems. Steve's comment was that they simply allowed extra time for transport. Joy (Mayfield) and 2 of the 3 buses were "perfect," the third was late due to a mechanical.

Pre-AF Communication

As invitations, in my experience, tend to be either elegant, or silly, or both, but humor seems to be important. There generally is a follow-up letter, seeking to teams who have accepted the invitation, full of pertinent details, and more humor.
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Shells and I invited everybody imaginable. We knew that as a not-very-widely-known team, we weren’t likely to attract huge numbers of people, and we were right. Next time, Berkeley will have to be more selective. St. Anselm, Monday, 77th, the Fourth, and the Midwest Ale were basically open to any who were interested.

The Stu and Marlboro are by invitation only. The Bouvier’s criteria is that the team be excellent dancers who are good to be with. They insist that the terms be essentially the same from year to year. Marlboro looks for a balance of men and women, and an even geographical spread. They pay attention to the traditions owned, to social subserviency, and try to have one or two non-Colonial teams. Marlboro introduces some new teams every year, while rotating in teams from a pool of regular attendees. They don’t invite a team until it’s been in attendance for two years, to encourage folks from freming a team just for the fun of it.

Publicity:

This was one of the failures of my quadroness. Several people thought I was setting if they publicized their roles to the Morris community, as opposed to potential audiences. Several indicated that they had publicized their roles through the ODE newsletter and the AMMB, but didn’t say whether or not they publicized the ALE stops to the public in order to attract an audience. The Morristown didn’t say how they accomplished it, but there were people waiting for us to arrive in most of the small towns we hit. Berkeley, Bouvier’s, the Fourth, and Marlboro used general media: newspapers, radio, posters.

Publicity didn’t work well for Berkeley. Marlboro advertised within about a 200-mile radius, and as I remember, the shows were mostly pretty well attended. The show dance stops attract massive numbers of people, which is at least partly due to the traditional nature of those stops. John (Bouvier) estimated that the most important thing is to “Always remember that the dancing ithe must be not only danceable, but in PUBLIC places, for we have not to dance exclusively for rocks and trees and no matter how beautiful.” And I think that is true for most of us.

Evocateur:

Most teams create a brochure or flyer to hand out to fascinated audience members who demand more information than the food or cake bearer has time to impart. These brochures are frequently three-fold, and contain some or all of the following: photos or drawings or dancers or dance-related paraphernalia; a short piece on what the audience is seeing, usually a historical or fanciful explanation.
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of the Morris; a listing of which teams are present, with a short description of their size, a plan for money, and a contact name and phone number, in case the reader desperately wants to join a Morris team, or is interested in getting further information.

**Finances:**

I asked for budgeting information for the axes, but didn’t get enough hard figures, and permission to publish them, to make it worthwhile to present them in this article. The general consensus was that teams make up fairly informed budgets. These budgets are based on expenses divided by the number of people the team thinks will show up, and on the events of the past and annual events, on past experience as well. Expenses include such things as (depending on the axe) beer, family; cigers, mice, food, beverages, and paper and plastic products, tax rental, hall rental; photos, pocket, brochures, set up cost, feast program, t-shirts, bus fare, first aid, fired cooks, address books (?), postage, photocopy, stationery, telephone, ferry tickets, ice, gas, wood, clean-up materials, and of course the ubiquitous “Misc.” which covers a multitude of forgotten disasters.

Some high item on the axe budgets I was not to include accommodations, food, beer/other alcoholic beverages, tax rental, T-shirts and buttons.

Teams try to break even, or end up with some money for “next time.” Some teams end up with a profit—Some of the axe makes a profit some years, not others. Profits are used variously for used money, to subsidize visiting English teams, and to subsidize trips. One team always keeps between $600-700 which is made good by the bag-and/or personal contributions.

**Cash, donations etc.:**

Some teams try to solicit money and goods to keep the axe fees down. Berkeley tried, and was fairly successful with money, ice cream, beer, and some food. Ailsa and she just opened the phone book and made calling businessmen. The main donation came from some friends of the team. Other gifts come from Reilly, local breweries, and an ice cream store. We were able to keep our axe fee down to $10.00 a hand that way.

Maroon Beats got a grant from the City of Boulder, a grant from a private donor, and fare at cost from a brewery. The Moosybacks called in favors owed by local sororities, and others “were generous.” The campsite was located by a
friend. Sunset solicited beer successfully, but paid for everything else. Mayfield did quite a lot of successful soliciting, but gave me no details. The other teams said they don’t solicit donations, but some keep costs down by not providing every meal.

Food & Beverage:

At the Duck, the food was provided by the camp staff. This seemed to cause some difficulty, as the cooks had trouble getting the concept that they were feeding innumerable dancers, not young boys (we were housed at a boys’ camp). The food itself was not great, but Sunset had no choice in the matter, and it was better than home casseroles. Most did seem to deal with this problem by hiring friends or doing it themselves. It’s more economical, and generally far more interesting. (Note: this year, the food at the Duck was much better.)

The Feast:

Every six teams to provide a Feast, generally on Saturday night. From what I have observed in the last 5 years, these feasts with all they encompass to make them special, and the dancing that usually follows, have contributed enormously to welding the teams in this country into a strong community.

The Bouvier’s Boys, if their programmatic aims are any indication, had quite a formal meal, with a schedule which included a place for boats and at least one speech. Entertainment provided by teams was requested. Their feast usually last for 3 hours, with dancing elsewhere, afterwards, under the huts back to the site “through Nature itself.” Having never been to the Shat, I can only report that rumors about this hike are idle and fascinating.

Beckwith’s feast was much less formal, because we could not leave the site to go to a hall. Or, rather, we could have left the site, but we would not have been able to get back into it, due to camp curfew. (This is something to be considered when choosing a site, we decided that it was not a problem, but others might feel differently, and be willing to pay a higher price to be able to achieve more formality.) It was catered by friends. We left for skiis, etc., but didn’t demand any. Official thank-you’s and gifts were presented. Pick-up Morris and contra dancing followed.

The Pirates had a formal, wonderful ethnic meal, the Finest. It was provided by friends of the teams. Dancers came in evening attire, and the musicians were
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welcomed if they wore a dress. Skirts were encouraged, and the dancers responded admiringly.

Marlboro had a buffet-style supper. Skirts were welcomed, and there was a contra dance later, with a band composed of some of the most eminent Morris musicians in the country.

Marconis held a feast Sunday night, with skirts after. There was a Master of Ceremonies, who announced the schedule in advance. It included songs, skits, jokes, spoofs, and awards.

The Massachusets had a feast catered most excellently and interestingly by friends, with "watches" and "hacks" serving. One year we were served by Galactic Olgale Blisters, and another, those churls that you slay down on the table, and they fun. Ken claims that entertainment is strongly encouraged, not required, but I'll hate to think what they would have done to any team which declined the honor! Testimonials and speeches occurred. As did various other unmentionable things. Pick-up Morris dancing followed.

Sumter had a formal feast provided by the camp, and Jay said, "It was well organized, but happened the way it did anyway."

By calling their site The Duck, Sumter did a wonderful thing. I don't know if they planned it this way, but the name ended up providing the focus for quite a lot of creativity throughout the weekend. Many duck-like items appeared at the site, in a variety of forms. In one of their readings, they claimed that "Duck-under-Armedoon Quackers" would be performed at a mass dance, so several teams, including Sumter, performed some version of what a dance of that name ought to look like. Skirts were more-or-less required, and dancing, overwhelmed by gratitude, made presentations. Swimming pool and pick-up Morris dancing followed.

Mayfield had a gentleman serving wine in very formal apparel, and champagne and truffles served by women dressed, very flatteringly, in lycra and spandex in team colors. Skirts were encouraged. Organized contra dancing, and later pick-up Morris dancing, followed.

Things moved at other sites in recent years. Half Moon's feast (1987) was fancy dress, with a contra following. The Jugular Meadow/White Robins Columbus Day Weekend was done up very beautifully with autumn decor: gourds, pumpkins, etc. Some pick-up Morris dancing and much singing followed. Western Blue has an unflattering density of fine singers. The final night party, or
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"Ale. At the end of the New Zealand tour, was a feast provided by the Moriss who ran the hotel where we were staying. We then moved to a hall, where pick-up Morris dancing was done all evening long, in a hypersensitive forest. One requested a dance from any traditions at all, it got written on the board, and the MC eventually announced it. The dancing stopped periodically for special presentations and shows. Tea was served."

Other news

There is a wild vacation here, as well. The Duck provided every meal. Mahirho provided Sunday lunch and dinner, and the dinners provided the rent for themselves. The other teams fell somewhere in between. Of note, 1,144, was that the Mosspack and the Brownies provided afternoon tea at their site. Very civilized. The Mosspack also provided a full bar in the evening, and espresso in the morning, for a small donation.

How many meals are provided affects the amount of the ale for quite significantly, not to mention the amount of work required on the part of the hosts, so that is definitely something to consider. Berkeley told people to bring their own breakfast, but we provided very high-quality coffee and tea, starting at about 6:00 am. We also ended up providing coffee cakes, since the money flow was good.

Post

One of the more vexing questions: How on earth do you know how much beer people will consume? Berkeley based our estimator on the Mosspack's, and later Sunset based theirs on Berkeley's, but with different results. The Mosspack "got as much as we thought we needed, then more more to be safe." Berkeley had an embarrassing amount left over, but Sunset, saying our figures, multiplied for the additional attendance, then "multiplied by 1/10th just in case." They had less than 1/6 left. (Part of Berkeley's was homebrew, with the malt & hops label on it.)

The Brownies Boys usually provide 3 bags, 2.5 in camp, 2.5 for the feast. They "first that if it is there, men drink it." A Finney figure roughly 3 beers per person for the feast, and found that was about right. Friday night was BBQ. They also provided wine at the feast, and champagne for Sunday night, at 3 people to the bottle, which was too much. Mahirho only provides beer for Sunday night, and generally run out before the end. Teams bring a certain amount of their own. Andra said they could provide more "if we wanted to have
a truly drunken bash," but that nobody complains, and if it looks like there really isn't enough, they go fetch more. Maroon Bells provided 110 gallons, and only drank half of it. 50 gallons of theirs were home brew.

**Composition:**

When asked, "Did you introduce any element of competition — either overtly or covertly," I think Andrea nuanced it neatly: "Definitely covertly... I don't think it's fair to say we are necessarily responsible for it. When people get together there's going to be an element of 'who do you think is best?' I do think there's an element of teams wanting to look their best for the sake, because that's what other teams see them. Just the very nature of an ale makes it covertly competitive." Marlboro did introduce the notion of blue ribbons one year. In each registration packet was a blue ribbon, with instructions that it be bestowed on some worthy team or individual at the ale. It became a "force." People were given the ribbons for silly things, or "acts of bravery." Generally, the teams and they did not advertise any competition.

**Mar: Dances:**

Berkeley: One chose one dance for each tradition done in our area, plus a couple standard dances. We did not have a teaching session, but we did send out notes. The official key of the ale was G. Brandon John chose dances from lesser known traditions "to keep things interesting." They did teach. Ha Pennsy. Rubby and at the Ph'orne they were not taught, "just spontaneous." Marlboro. Andrea said they tried to try and choose what they see as the most common, but that's not necessarily true any more. The second information letter listed likely dances. The dances were taught Friday night. Maroon Bells. Steve said they used "the usual midwest mass dances." No notes were sent out, but the dances were taught on Friday night, reviewed on Saturday morning. The official key of the ale was G. Mouybacks. Ken said they were exceedingly relaxed about the whole process, and they didn't send out notes in advance, and didn't teach the dances, but I remember that in 1987, at midnight on Friday night, some of the dances were gone through, despite the slope of the site, and the copious whiskey. Or perhaps because of it. Sunset. Jay said they choose standard dances, and there was no teaching. They did send out notes. They claimed, as I recall, that the official key of the ale was C#, but they were also laughing up their sleeves.

I neglected to ask what dances were used, but from my own files I can say that in the West, the likely dances are: Fieldtown Baloney the Stock, Bumpkin Nightfall
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In the East, they are likely to be "Balance the Straw and Step Back, Fieldtown; Highland Mary and Step A, Fetch Her, Bampton; Shepherd's Hey and Lads A Bunchum, Adderbury, and Young Collins and Morningstar, Headington.

Workshops

The West Coast does not schedule workshops. Perhaps we feel we have quite a lot by doing pick-up dancing all night long.

In fact, the only people who reported having workshops were Massholes and the Midwest All. Andrea said that a lot of people do not attend, but a lot do, and with 250 dancers, that's just fine. Workshops on Sunday morning were taught by the same visiting from England, as their traditional Monday workshops were cancelled last year, because the weather was so beautiful. But the Morris Olympics were a lot of fun.

Steve said they had workshops in Oldfield pipe and border, tango, and English clog. He reported that people did attend, though whether they were sober enough to gain from them was questionable. On their registration form, they asked for volunteers to teach workshops.

In summary, I asked for any final comments on the production, and got some rather nice ones.

Sheila (Berklay) commented that for organization, a happy medium between a two-person team and the "committee-to-you" approach should be sought. "The labor around a good bit. She also felt that crucial importance was placed on coffee, beer, and plain water; early deadlines; and that it is helpful to have the same, address and phone number of every single attendee." I agree.

John (Bouverie) feels that supplying the venues and frameworks for "outrage" is important. They have found that "the Men appreciate the chance to attend a Man's weekend." Again, he stressed that scheduling is extremely important, and said, "We all give the smallest detail, and go to perhaps too great an expense to insure success. It is not worth it otherwise.

Steve (Macon) said that having a good sound system for indoor mass dance practice and Saturday contra dance is helpful, and that one bull horn per tour
would have been good. For mass dancing, “this time” was signaled by one person with a very loud whistle. It worked well. He said, “Expect late registrations no matter how steep the late fee, and watch out for freeloaders who show up for meals and dancing but don’t pay. Follow the area after mass dancing for forgotten items, and have a central lost and found.”

Ken (Keszyback) said, “The most important recurring consideration (besides the logistics...) was how do we make the Ale reflect the Molbak team personality? What little tweaks do we add to make it a distinctively Molbak event? We wanted people to go away saying and feeling “that was a Molbak,” not just another Ale. Hence the afternoon tea, the Fan Galactic Gargle Blasters, the Dick’s French Fries, the espresso machine (the only electric appliance at the camp), etc.”

My own feeling is that, while every attempt should be made to make the ale an exuberant, exciting, educational experience, if enough dancers, musicians, and beer are put in one place for long enough, they will have fun, regardless of almost anything else. I found this was a comforting notion when in the midst of the panic of site planning and preparation.

From art and T-shirt design by Bob Domcek.

Figure set and T-shirt design by Bob Domcek.

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ON THE STREET WITH THE T.F.M.M.

by John Mayberry

The Toronto Morris Men (T.F.M.M.) are an urban Morris side whose main function is to perform around the city of Toronto (pop. 2,600,000) usually on the street. We try to dance out once a week late October - early May and generally appear unheralded and unannounced. We do dance at sites, festivals, museum shows, etc., but our "bread and butter" is the self-directed downtown tour, undertaken with a minimum of planning. As artists of T.F.M.M. I take ultimate responsibility for the quality of these outings, and would like to share some thoughts on maximizing the enjoyment of a dance-out. Some of these ideas and hints may pertain only to city life, but I hope a more universally applicable mindset will also be illustrated.

My basic premise is that as sole initiators of what we call "street-and-grab" tours, we are completely responsible for the events we construct. In other words, if we do not have a successful tour, it is our own fault. Furthermore, the success of a tour, or the enjoyment had by the dancers, often has little to do with the quality of the dancing (although the process you are, the energy everything else is). There are many variables which can be considered and manipulated by a team out for an evening, but everything counts. The better you can preconceive the intended result, the more likely it is to happen. The dancing is what you practice all winter with exactly this sort of "view of the future", but there are four other components to a performing side which deserves as much careful thought: PARK, BARK, RAG, and DEER.

PARK: "How's your $tate here?"

Before you can do anything, you need to choose a place to dance (park the side). This is easy if you always dance in the same spot, or if a tour organizer has already chosen in advance, based on a good knowledge of a team's requirements. But if you are perpetrating an unplanned performance, the tour leader must be able to assess a venue quickly in order to prevent a discussion (or "banned opinion monster"). One way to be ready to judge an area for suitability is to have a preset list of your team's dance-out requirements (D.O.R.'s). For example, ours would be in descending order of importance: 1) beer close by, 2)
Having decided on a place to dance, the next step is to take complete responsibility for the audience's experience. Design your stage; where is your audience (are sides all around?), where is the music, which way is up? Most importantly, where is "offstage"? Have everyone plus gear (that monumental assortment of boxes, bags, coats, instruments, umbrellas, strollers and children that seemed necessary when you started out) in the least conspicuous spot. Think of the people who will take. Make sure that the best sight-lines are available for passers-by. All resting dancers in kit ("They also dance who only stand and drink") should stay out of the way, preferably watching the dance, but certainly not distracting from the main event. A fool or character is, of course, an upset element. Camp followers can be very useful as audience catalysts (or even "plants" or "shills" when bagging), positioned around the dancing area to help define the space and encourage people to stop and watch.

All this should happen effortlessly. All decisions made quickly and communicated effectively. The object is to avoid random phenomena. If you are out in public in Kit you are an object of attention and scrutiny, especially as a group. There is no such thing as being "off", or invisible. Whatever you do is watched and absorbed by the public. This includes impromptu jive lessons, practising the "Wassail Concerto" on melodeon, or milling around swearing at the squire. I would suggest that if these are things your side would like to do at a stand, you practise them instead of Morris. I'm reminded of an important distinction made by Bob Deluca ("One Man's Fool", Am. vol. 13 no 2) between a true fool and someone merely dressed as a fool. There is an equally important distinction between a Morris dancer and someone dressed as a Morris dancer. "What are you guys supposed to be?" "We are the Toronto Morris Men". You have gone to a lot of trouble to set yourselves up as people worth watching. Don't squander that attention or you'll lose your audience. Keep in mind your own images of how you want to be seen by others, and work towards that. Think of the Morris you've enjoyed and enjoyed. Things like humming dropped hats and handkerchiefs on the ground, finishing a botted figure with convolutions and aplomb, or starting and finishing a dance or a stand crisply and authoritatively, go a long way towards a memorable show. All these are part of displaying the dance, or parking your side.

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As well as being heard, you must be intelligent. Remember that you're giving very unfamiliar information, so you must communicate it clearly. Always keep in mind that the point is not a "bark" as in a dog, but to actually communicate something important to the listeners. Always take the time to organize your thoughts clearly and speak in a logical manner.

Morris announcers usually try to say too much. You don't need to describe it, you're doing it. Though a picture may be worth a thousand words, the thing itself is absolutely and entirely self-explanatory. This is Morris dancing. No one is likely to care, even if they hear and understand, that "the dance was invented in the early 1960s." A brief, preferably definable, statement telling the audience what you're doing is all you really need. "It's English folk dancing." We're doing some good-humored dancing. "We'd like to do a dance called "The Country Bumpkin." Have an easy way to give out more information (hand-outs, business cards, postcards, balloons) of desired.

Make sure you pitch your language to your crowd. Avoid being too technical or confusing, but try to interpret what you consider essential information so
It takes amazing vocal technique to be able to deliver a two or three word "zinger" clearly enough that the audience can tell where it's coming from, let alone understand it. Those who try to make humorous observations while actually dancing compound the problem by trying to be heard over the music, with little breath. Save it! A possible exception is the quiet comment to someone you happen to dance near, such as "How 'd you like it so far?"

One of the Barker's jobs, especially if there is no foot, is to provide a break between dances, both for the viewer and dancer. If you want to try extemporeaneous announcing, also known as babbling, be warned that, as with fooling, it is not as easy as it seems. At its best, this can be a flurry of linguistic daring-do and excess, a chance to keep the crowd amused by hyperbolic descriptions of unimaginable delights to come or nonsensical forays into the recesses of the human psyche. At its worst, it can be an embarrassment. The only advice I can give is to try it. Relax, try to think of the audience as people who are going to meet you more than half-way, people who will be interested and amused by whatever comes out of your mouth. Try to connect your mouth with your imagination, and don't edit. Have a few stock phrases to prime the pump - pithy sectarian allusions to the fact that everyone watching would soon give him some money. Each time he said something like "Please sit down in the front row to let those behind see. After all, we're all paying, aren't we?" he'd get a laugh. Then, when he was finished his act, he'd let people know that now they could come up to pay him - "don't be impatient, you'll all get a chance" - and they did. By leading up to it gradually, he avoided scaring the crowd away with his collecting hat. A Morris Barker can do much the same thing by referring to the collection a few times.
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BAG: "A buck in the duck brings you luck."

Begging is a very important part of this event we conduct. The first thing is that there is no reason to be embarrassed. Don't worry, if people don't want to contribute, they won't. So don't feel bad about "putting them on the spot". As for feeling funny about "begging", think of it this way: We practice as much as 52 hours each over the course of the winter. Why? Partly for our own amusement, but mainly to be able to offer the public a fine product. I have no qualms about providing the opportunity to give or receive in return. People like to give money. When parents "allowing" their children to drop a quarter in the collection. Giving performers some money for what they have just done involves someone in a personal contract with the performer. "They are doing this for any pleasure", I think that this is one of the most powerful factors in the enjoyment of live performances - the appreciation of hours of practice and rehearsal for the benefit of the individual observer.

Passing the hat (or "bottling", as Cockney street slang) by a Morris side is not a request for charity, nor is it a way to eke out wages for the side. It is, however, a way to contact people. The bag is the audience's real contact with the team. The person with the open hat, or frog, or purse, or whoever, at the one who most often asks questions, hands out brochures and sparks conversations. People seem to respond favorably to our collecting receptacle, a plastic lawn duck named "Bill" with a leather handle, two slots and a locked bottom. Not only does Bill perform his primary function admirably, he also helps people (both bystander and patrons) relax and relax.

Some stock phrases can be useful when passing the duck. The best standard is something non-threatening like "Have you had an opportunity to put something in the duck for luck? Or you can go for the honesty vote. "They say it brings good luck, but we spend all the money on beer." You can even try "It's just like in church!"

Don't ask with the collection. Often the月至, constant circulation through the crowd is less off-putting and more profitable than a well-publicized bleat. Be as genuinely pleased with a penny as with a dollar. Thank people. Rand people who don't (or can't) contribute for watching the dancing. Try to make people glad to be there.
BEER: "Twelve plott of Comer's, please?"

The refreshment stop after a stand is a big part of the overall success of a tour. It should be obvious that you aim for a pub which can accommodate the sudden influx of your group. This can be tricky on a rough-and-grab: where you haven't checked it out ahead of time. One good technique is to send someone in during your last dance or two to see the possibilities - is there a back room, do you all have to stand at the bar, etc. The main thing to keep in mind is that if you're not careful, the management may find your intrusion outrageous your custom, leading to a sour experience for everyone. Realize that the staff may have been set for a quiet night, when suddenly 15 thirsty people come in expecting prompt service. The best way to establish a good relationship is to have the advance scout order (and pay for, if necessary) the required drinks, which are then waiting for you once Bill is empty. Make the server's job easy (it helps if you all drink the same brand) and tip well. You may be back.

Take off your bells when going inside. This will be appreciated by the management and other patrons. If you decide to do some pub dancing, you can always put them back on.

Once you are in the pub you are in a half-public, half-private world. It's no longer true that everything you do is a public performance, but people are still watching you. The tradition of the private-public place enables you (as long on one subject) to indulge in some singing, dancing, etc. in a way that would be out of place on the street. The best Morcree tours (especially mid-term) cultivate this kind of venue, which is the appropriate place for testing jigs, songs, tunes, silly dances, or anything else which is another street performance or practice. Having some of your energy, creativity and silliness for such a pub stop is a great boon for your street performances.

I also have several thoughts that couldn't be placed under the (admittedly arbitrary) categories of Park, Band, Bag and Beer. Call them dance-out etiquette. They pertain to dancing with another side. Ask before you borrow anything, including sticks, horns and instruments. Don't assume you can play with another musician merely because you know the tune. Don't assume another
in price. recently, this looked nigh impossible
in the price per person c&n reaching untold heights. To deal with the cost factor, we incorporated a non-profit and began applying for grants to bring down the cost of the Ale. This has proved to be worth all the effort. The Missouri State Council for the Arts has awarded a $14,000 grant to write the costs of the Ale. Then, on top of that, a site finally was located (we still don't know why we missed it before) that is both reasonable in cost, close to the city, and allows ale on site. So things are looking very bright for an Ale that is not only a good home but affordable. More news will come if you are interested in attending the Ale, and have never been before, contact me at the address below.

Carol Dunn, 1643 NE Vivian Rd., Kansas City, MO 64118

Rock Creek Morris Women, Washington D.C.

Our year started off with a birth - or is it that last year ended with one? August Voorhees ("Gus" to us) arrived very late in the day on Dec. 31, 1989. In spite of this, in January we were able to re-elect his mother, Jenni, as squires. Mary Clew continues as our foreman.
This spring, Rock Creek organized two ales: in March, the CDSS 75th anniversary celebration on the national Mall, where we and thirteen other teams danced in and around the Smithsonian on Earth Day weekend; and, in June, Quail Hill Ale VII, which featured holding a be-a-a relief, Swan Lake Morris and a moral Morris tale along with the usual dancing and shanty. Wake Robin, Albermarle, Bluestem, Baltimore, and Poggy Beale came to visit, dance, and experience the pleasures of pond, teen, and trampoline at Quail Hill Farm.

In May, we traveled to New York for the Greenwich Mac's Small Scale Ale. They showed us a good time, making the Cyclone (Dramarama's highest rated roller coaster) and other boardwalk delights available to us by touring at Coney Island and Prospect Park. Gus (whose first bell pad feature real Morris bells) danced out for the first time on a farm in Queens. Yes, we were down on the farm in New York City!

We have enjoyed the company of several visitors and advisors at practice this year, including the permanent arrival of Sally Lockman from Mystic Garden, Mary Anglund visiting from Ray Morris in Bristol, England and John Drummer, who has settled in our area and is gracing us with his presence and benefiting us with his experience.

The local Northwest movement is gaining energy, and a mixed side is practicing fairly regularly at Glen Echo in the bumper car pavilion. People are coming to this from as far as Baltimore and Blumental. If you are willing to travel, you are welcome to come too!

---

Martha Hayes, 116 Lee Ave., #514, Takoma Park, MD 20912

Rose Galliard Northwest Morris, Concord, MA

This spring we kept ourselves busy participating in the Boston area Spring Revels. We even got to pull the rush cart, leaving some of us feeling like Clydesdales. In the midst of these activities, we organized twelve morris teams at the annual Lime Sunday Festival at the Arnold Arboretum. There were more raindrops than lilacs, but we warmed up nicely afterwards at a local pub, where the Rose Galliard songbook received its public christening (with ale, of course). Summer seems getting ready to expand our repertoire and our ranks, with time out during the Rose Galliard Beach outing (no dancing, but lots of sand to improve those rant muscles).
We will take part again this summer in southwestern Manitoba's Festival of Nations. This year's festival will be held in Notre Dame de Lourdes, just down the road from previous sites in Holland and Swan Lake. There are a number of other outdoor performances lined up near Grand Forks, North Dakota, thanks to the hospitality of the local ringling club, and in Cook's Creek, Manitoba.

-- Dan Stone, 154 Quateman St., Winnipeg, MB, CANADA R3H 0W7

1990 Midwest Morris Ale

Leg design by Jim Elkhart. Poster and T-shirt art were based on the same design
"The Button Box"

* New & used accordions; concertinas " Repairs & custom work *

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**Prices are subject to change.**

- **Reconditioning Services**
  - Traditional German concertinas
  - American-made concertinas

- **Customizations**
  - Additional panels
  - Additional buttons
  - Additional straps
  - Additional finishes

- **Prices**
  - $275 for a complete reconditioning and customization
  - $150 for a partial reconditioning

**Services Include**
- New and used accordion repair and adjustment
- Professional maintenance
- Installation of new strapping, quarter toning, rebase, rainstones, etc.

**Prices**
- $15 for a button replacement
- $10 for a button installation

**Adjustments**
- $25 for a professional adjustment
- $15 for a beginner adjustment

**Customizations**
- $500 for a complete custom design
- $200 for a partial customization