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Editors' Disclaimer: The editors of the American Morris Newsletter wish to encourage the use of this publication as a forum for the free exchange of ideas. Therefore, the opinions published herein may not be our own.
With this issue of the AMN, we go back to having a theme: dance ownership.

The seed was planted several years ago, when my mother was bragging to my aunt that I had written a dance which was being done by several teams. My aunt's response was, "That's nice, dear, do you get royalties?" (I will let the reader imagine the subsequent conversation.) This question, which was an obvious one as far as my aunt was concerned, really took me by surprise—and set me thinking about the issue of dance ownership in our morris culture, since once a new dance has been performed in public, the choreographer basically loses control of it. With or without his or her permission, if it's really good—and approachable—it will be picked up by other teams, and it might end up being part of the world-wide repertoire. Fairly soon newer dancers won't even know that it is not "traditional," much less who wrote it. The Three Musketeers and Lass of Richmond Hill spring to mind. When I suggested this topic to my co-editors, we immediately had a 20-minutes-long animated conversation about it. We've had even more, and longer, conversations about it since, which assured us that this would indeed be a good topic for the AMN.

Who owns morris dances? Does anyone? How do choreographers feel about what happens to their dances? Is it ok to see a new dance at an ale, or on a tape, be impressed by it, and teach it to your team without asking permission of the author? Is simply asking and receiving permission adequate? Because even if you have the dance on tape or you've managed to notate it, there's no way of knowing how close the dancers got, in the particular performance that you taped or notated, to achieving what the choreographer meant. Asking for a workshop is a good way of dealing with that problem, but sometimes it is simply impractical.

How do choreographers feel about other teams changing/evolving their dance? And what about taking it from one tradition into another? Or putting it to a different tune? Or taking the tune, and using it for another dance? Then there is the related—perhaps inseparable—issue of "traditional" teams who do not wish their dances to be performed by anyone else, e.g., Abingdon and Chipping Campden.

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Well, the choreographers of their dances are no longer alive to say yea or nay, but the team members have made it plain that they do not wish to have their dances done elsewhere by others.

We are glad that the Abingdon Morris responded to our plea for a piece from them about their philosophy, since this issue would have been incomplete without it.

We have started this issue with a submission from Ken Smith of Seattle Morris, both because it is a follow-up to Rick Mohr's contribution to the "Inventing Traditions" issue (AMN 19, No. 4) and because it segues nicely into the issues surrounding the ownership of dance, music, and tradition. We've ended the thematic piece with Tony Barrand's submission, "Be It Ever So Traditional, There's No Place Like Colne." (Given the content of this piece, we were amused to find that the computer's spell checker didn't like "Colne" and suggested "c1one.") Because of the unexpected length of many of the theme articles, which we didn't feel should be cut, some of the usual AMN features have been left out until next time.

Again, we would like to see the AMN used as a forum for discussion. So, having read what we present here, please feel free to write, call, email us your reactions (contact information may now be found on the facing page). Now that we have entered into our second year as editors, we would welcome any feedback regarding the AMN: e.g., suggestions for themes, the volunteering of articles, team news, book reviews, etc., although if you're thinking of an article, we would be grateful if you contacted us first to discuss whether the AMN is the appropriate forum for your work.

All the best for a 1997 full of dance and music.

-The AMN crew

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I am writing in response to Rick Mohr's excellent article about the creation of the Elm City dances. Seattle Morris, as Rick noted, is one of few morris sides performing these dances, and I thought a little follow-up to his article might be in order.

The Elm City dances came to us via our previous foreman, David Sacco, who had danced with Rick on New Haven Morris & Sword. Seattle Morris's first tradition was Wheatley, followed by Sherborne. At a certain point, we felt ready for a new challenge, and David suggested Elm City—partly because he liked it and partly because virtually no one was doing it. Certainly no one on the West Coast had ever heard of it, let alone seen it. We began working on it in the spring and summer of 1994 and performed an Elm City dance in public for the first time at the Northwest FolkLife Festival, Memorial Day 1995. We slipped occasional Elm City dances into performances in the summer of 1995 and at the Duck and Cover Ale in Los Angeles in April 1996.

David taught us Elm City based both upon his memory of dancing with New Haven and upon discussions and correspondence with Rick. The style we began with was thus very similar, I believe, to how New Haven danced Elm City during David's days with them. We have made several changes to our dancing of Elm City since we first began; most of these, I confess, came about during my current tenure as foreman.

First, on the aptly named up-a-down-down, we originally raised both arms on the "up." I knew from what David had told me that Rick's original vision was to raise only the right arm, i.e., the arm with the stick, but that New Haven had not danced it that way. I personally always felt funny raising both arms when only one hand was holding anything. Consequently, I changed this as soon as I took over teaching.

Secondly, we naturally fell into starting figures without a catch or hitch step. I'm not sure if this was a conscious decision on David's part, the way New Haven started the figures, or our own little idiosyncratic behavior flowing out of the way we dance Sherborne. After reading Rick's article, I decided that we should use a catch or hitch.

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My primary concern was to further emphasize the differences between Elm City and Sherborne, our primary tradition. There are a lot of differences already between the two, particularly from the audience's point of view, so this change was made to further separate the two in the minds of our dancers, my thought being that the more we distinguish them in our own minds, the better we differentiate them in the perception of the audience.

This change made possible—or inevitable—a third change. The catch step made a more explosive charge into the figures possible. This "charge," in turn, allowed us to dramatically expand the amount of ground we could cover during these figures and/or increase the speed, movement, and boldness of other figures. The figures became bigger, bolder, and stronger than they had been without the catch step. Simply put, the character of the dances changed. Thus, our interpretation of Elm City now strongly emphasizes the horizontal plane of the dance, i.e., the movement of the set across the ground; the up-a-down-down serves as a vigorous counterpoint and balance. This contrasts very strongly—and very favorably I believe—with our interpretation of Sherborne, which emphasizes the vertical plane. Again, this satisfies my lust for contrast between the traditions we dance (one of my pet peeves is sides choosing to dance traditions that are too similar). But it also validates the idea that not every tradition has to be danced way up in the stratosphere, that the fundamental aesthetic principle underlying the morris is pattern, shape, and variation, and that there is great aesthetic potential in any tradition that is put together well and performed well.

The fourth change may perhaps be the most interesting. This year we made Elm City our winter tradition in place of border. Last year we experimented with border morris dances, and while there was enthusiasm for those dances within the group, I felt it never quite worked. Each of the border dances we attempted had little to do with the other border dances we tried. It was like trying to learn five or six traditions at once. I was not eager to repeat that experience this year, and we hit upon the idea of dancing Elm City in the winter and changing to an all black kit (though not black face). We felt that Elm City has, in its own way, a feeling that is reminiscent of border, and that feeling was one of appropriateness to the season. That is to say, Elm City does not feel like border, but it feels the way border feels. It seems to me that border dances are danced in the winter not because it is winter and that is when border is traditionally danced,
but because the character of border dances fits the season. I am tempted to theorize that border dances were made up to fit the mood and character of the season, but that's another tree limb for another day. The character of Elm City dances—at least as we dance them—also fits the character of the season. And, in turn, I believe that the character of the season shaped our interpretation of the dances; the expansion and strengthening of movement made possible by the introduction of the catch-stop was encouraged by dancing in winter. So we have in effect taken what was invented to be a Spring/Cotswold tradition and made it into a winter tradition (though we will no doubt include Elm City dances in our spring and summer performances this year).

In closing, I note that when David originally approached Rick about adding Elm City to our repertoire, he was asking Rick’s permission to do so. If Rick had said no, David would have respected that decision and Elm City wouldn’t be in our repertoire. I feel much the same way, and I also feel that way about “traditional” sides that do not wish other sides to perform their dances. Once the genie is out of the bottle, however, there is no way to prevent change from creeping in. So much of what we do is driven by local circumstance, e.g., the physical abilities and/or limitations of the dancers, the local climate, performance venues, etc.; and since circumstances never quite stay the same, a certain creeping change is inevitable (particularly where there are significant differences between sets of local circumstances). This is true not just for new traditions, but for “traditional” traditions as well. And this is true, I think, regardless of how hard we try to keep things the same. When making changes to our interpretation of Elm City, I did not discuss them with Rick in advance. My feeling is that if we have permission to dance Elm City, we have permission to change it (change it, that is, not reinvent it). Second, I understood—and Rick’s article I think supports me—that Rick was amenable to changes being made. And third, I didn’t realize until I sat down to write this article that I hadn’t been aware of how fundamental a shift in interpretation occurred because of simply changing the season in which we performed it. Circumstance, it seems, cares little whether we are aware of it.
Ownership of Tradition: Borrowed or Stolen Art?

Ted Hodapp

Whatever it is you try to do with your life, nothing will ever dazzle you like the dreams of your body. -Mary Oliver

When someone copies text of almost any kind it's called plagiarism or copyright infringement. What happens when someone copies a dance figure or does a dance in a way or in a place that is different from the way that dance has been done for a long time? The ownership of tradition remains a contested issue today because people have an emotional or personal tie to the dance being performed. This article will finally and completely settle all questions surrounding these issues, so read on!

First of all, who am I to spout such marvelous truths about such heady issues? Well, the name is up in the masthead, so you can read that. As to my qualifications, I have been fighting tradition for a good part of my life—which is not to say I don't like tradition, only that I want to own the traditions I participate in and not be forced into accepting traditions that do not reflect my life and my community. I've helped make some local traditions through original choreography and contributed to others in various ways. I also direct a rapper and a longsword team that do "traditional" dances. The longsword team is called the Asworded Nuts. We have performed the dance from Kirkby Malzeard for about 8 years now. I'm not sure how many people would call what we do traditional, but the dance is done in pretty much the same way Sharp described it, with the small caveat that we do it at rapper tempo and wear Hawaiian shirts and sunglasses (to fight that fierce Minnesota January sun). Are we a "traditional" dance team? Again, all questions will be answered by this authoritative survey of current thought. If for any reason you are not completely satisfied with the conclusions you reach, your reading will be totally and cheerfully refunded.

This article delves into the touchy subjects (at least for some of you) of art ownership and tradition in two ways. First, what is tradition and what does it imply? This addresses the issue of how and when does one do a dance that might be danced by someone else (for
example, doing the Kirkby Malzeard dance in Kirkby Malzeard). Second, when is doing a dance or a figure or a style a "copyright infringement" on someone else's intellectual property? If I steal your rapper figure, will our lawyers be talking?

**TRADITION AND THE COMMUNITY**

What is this "tradition" thing anyway? To me, the concept is inextricably linked to that of community. A tradition is nothing outside of a community, since its power and message have meaning only to those who know about it. The community might be your dance group, your family (extended, contracted, or otherwise), or the people who watch you dance.

The trouble with communities (at least in the context of this article), is that they are not always yours. When you dance in public (and by public I mean for people other than your own team, which might include other dancers and musicians as well as the huddled masses yearning to breathe free), you may be dancing for your community as such, but within that there are, inevitably, other communities that either overlap with or stand apart from the community to which your tradition belongs. You cannot avoid it because communities are at their very heart an embodiment of diversity. I believe that is what gives communities their strength; ten identical people will not have the energy or internal resources that a group of ten diverse people will possess.

When we dance, we may be dancing for ourselves, but we nearly always include others in some way. Sometimes this is unintentional, sometimes not, but in either case being mindful (which is not to say paranoid) of these communities is, I think, an appropriate thing. We may choose to support a community through our dancing, but in the end, tradition is, in and of itself, a way of supporting community. When we think about how our art or our "tradition" affects others, the questions should come to mind: What community are we thinking of? Who belongs to that community? What investment do we have (or want to have) in maintaining that community? By answering these questions for ourselves, we are better able to make decisions about how our art affects others.
WHEN IS DOING A DANCE AN INFRINGEMENT?

Should you do other people's dances when they don't want you to? Their expression of intent may be explicit or implicit, but in either case a moral dilemma arises.

One consideration is respect for the wishes of individuals or a group. What is behind someone's request that you not do their dance? If the request is born out of elitism ("I collected this dance from the source, and he doesn't want anyone doing it who doesn't meet the 'standards'"), then I am inclined to ignore these requests. Dancing is never perfect. If we do not try things for fear that we will not "measure up," then we are doomed to mediocrity. The only way to reach the "standards" is to dance a great deal, exposing yourself to many dance forms and experimenting individually or as a group with the art form.

Another motivation may be one of "My team does this dance, and it is our 'signature.'" Okay, so you like the dance or style; that doesn't imply ownership. So let's take it a step further. This team choreographed the dance and spent time working it out, and they feel that it is their dance. This has been an issue for years in unrewarded figures. Someone makes up a new move (or more likely reinvents an old one) and wants to keep it for herself. Aside from any legal issues about doing someone else's choreography, there is first an issue of politeness. I am not sure how Miss Manners would respond, but the gentle reader can probably figure that issue out for herself. It obviously depends a great deal on how close you and your community are to the author's community. Assuming you can stomach the disregard for someone's request about not doing a figure, what are the ethics of this type of action?

One perspective on the ethics of this situation concerns just exactly what it means to do or "copy" someone else's dance move. Two issues seem to be important here.

First, copying of any art form is not an exact science. Your rendition of the dance will be automatically different. We invariably, either by design or by accident, add our own personal stamping to things. It is what makes good dancing such a wonderfully personal expression of art. The basic concept may be there, but dance is much more than a concept; it can, and usually does, include all the subtle details of rhythm, genre, spatial alignment, symmetry, and many other qualities (some more definable than others) that give each dancer or team a distinctive expression.

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The second thought pertains to motive. The phrase "imitation is the highest form of flattery" pops to mind. People wishing to do your dance, move, or style are doing so because they see something valuable in what you are doing. In my view, this type of compliment is high praise and should be taken as such.

Perhaps it is best to keep the entire issue in perspective. We are not talking about taking food from people's mouths, we are talking about dancing. There are precious few individuals involved in dancing who can actually claim to make a living from the activity. For the rest of us, it is a social, spiritual, physical, or artistic outlet. To want to copy or imitate is inherently an act of improvement rather than of encroachment. We seek to produce a better product, one that will more truly reflect what it means for each of us to dance. That expenditure is intimately personal and, to my mind, should be encouraged with the vigor that is associated with the defense that freedom of speech is accorded in this country. In the end it is like copying Bach. Musicians are trained (at least in formal theory courses) to understand Bach and other composers to the degree that they can write music in the style of that composer. Why don't they? There is certainly a large and enthusiastic appreciation for Baroque music, but composers want to produce music that is their own, not that of someone else. It is the need to express oneself that drives each artist to produce something better than was done before. The same is true in dancing. We produce a form based on traditions—on other people's traditions—and we strive to improve it and to make it our own. We dance the morris because it resonates in us at some level, but the tradition (for most of us) is not our own from birth. Should we copy other traditions? We have no choice, and as a guest T-Shirt I have seen says: "I don't want to do art, I want to be happy."

The alternative to having your work copied is to not do it in public. That ensures that it remains very closely linked to your community (kind of like a secret handshake). Minnesota Traditional Morris has a dance like this that we do not perform for the general public—never because we don't want people to copy it, but because saving it for performance at one of our major dance venues is an important way in which we help to maintain a sense of community. For most groups, however, the option of not performing a particular dance in public (especially a really neat one) is a bit less palatable, and it seems to defeat the whole purpose behind public performance.

There are definitely cases of more or less propriety when performing. For example, if your team was visiting Adderbury, England, AMN 20 No 1 @ 9 @ Spring 1997
and regularly performed dances in that style, should you do those dances while you are visiting? (This concern applies not only to places far away, but to any venue where someone else claims, either through body, or short-standing history, to “own” a dance or tradition.) Fundamentally, I see nothing wrong with this, but it is appropriate to question motives. Are you doing the dance to “show off”? Were you invited to dance there? If you roll up in a van and hop out and do a dance on a randomly-chosen street (not that I would admit to ever doing that), it hardly seems like a problem. However, driving to Abbots Bromley and pulling out your set of horns and costumes is probably not a good idea simply because doing so would, in most likelihood, antagonize people to a large degree and effectively ostracize you and your group from the community. Not only do you not make any friends, but you lose an opportunity to learn about the power of others’ traditions by drawing attention to yourself.

CONCLUSION

Every dance that you perform is a personal decision to dance. It is a choice of where you dance, whom you dance for and in what context. Propriety is not always the best route (the meek may inherit the earth, but they seldom do wicked dances). Your own brand of spice that turns you or your team into an inherently watchable entity will come from many sources. Copying or borrowing things tends to happen even when you try to avoid it (as can be witnessed in nearly any morris team that dances more than a single tradition—so, for that matter, any team that has danced previously on another team).

Traditions are powerful symbols. They support and define communities. The thought of stifling them or discouraging their growth and development seems to me antithetical to the nature of what tradition means. Some believe that tradition is the maintenance of a form or practice. I believe it is the evolution of what we do. It is not about “fixing” something; rather, it is the process of how we continually redefine ourselves through dancing. Borrowing and copying dances or dance styles are ways of describing the process of how we develop our traditions. To be sure, one needs to be aware of the feelings of others, but that awareness should not continue to the point that it keeps one from furthering individual development. If borrowing figures helps you to more fully realize the dreams of your body, then go for it!
"May I Have This Dance?"
Some Small Musings on Ownerships and the Morris

Peter Klosky
(Foreman, Binghamton Morris Men, Musician, B.E Harridans)

For the past 25 years, I have made my living in the field of exhibition and graphic design. In that time, my work has occasionally been used without permission or credit, a couple of instances resulting in silly litigation. Over time, I've become less fiery and outraged about these situations, realizing that expressing one's moral indignation is generally both pointless and costly. Still, I do firmly believe (theoretically at least) in the acknowledgment and creative control of those involved in artistic expression.

I have been involved in morris dancing for 21 years—initially as a dancer, subsequently as a teacher, and more recently as a musician as well. I have come to regard the morris as a complex and serious art form with unique opportunities for group and self expression within the fairly confined context of a traditional idiom. Toward that end, I have striven to maintain the aesthetics of those who were my teachers (and their mentors as well) while recognizing that any art form must avoid stagnation if it is to remain vibrant. I have worked to reinterpret stylistic aspects of our "traditional" repertoire, and I have also composed a number of contemporary dances, a couple of which have come to enjoy some small popularity beyond the sides with whom I perform. These endeavors produce certain inherent senses of proprietorship, the extent and commonality of which vary with their context.

Contemporary morris dances are, by and large, composed using a fairly restrictive vocabulary of movement drawn mainly from an existing "traditional" milieu; even with the addition of elements from related folk-dance forms, that pool is far from bottomless. The dance composer assembles these borrowed, found, or assumed elements in a sort of collage of movement. The arrangement is an

1. John Barleycorn Is a Hero Bold and Doryley Riding are two of Mr. Klosky's dances.

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original creation of the composer; its mechanical components are often the labors of many anonymous souls. Moreover, the composer’s aesthetic sense, judgment, and interpretation are ineluctably affected (if not determined) by his teachers, mentors, and colleagues. The result is a sort of shared primary ownership. The composer, as primary creator of the work, shares a portion of that ownership with the forces that formed his ability to create. Ethically, the composer deserves artistic control and acknowledgment. In the largely informal and non-professional genre of the morris, this is virtually unenforceable.

There is a secondary (or extended) ownership that comes into being when a composed dance or style interpretation is taught to a side of dancers. Depending on the political dynamics of the group, this can involve some small changes or permutations (not always consistent with the composer’s vision) to adapt that vision to the aesthetics and abilities of the whole. Does the composer have the right to demand sole artistic control over other works? Certainly, if she can get away with it. I can’t, on the side I dance with, and that is probably right. Jinky Wells excluded, the morris is not a one-man show. In my mind, it starts to approach its greater potential when it can, through vision and commonality, reflect and express the disparate characters of the individual players. The dance needs to fit its dancers organically. This is often the most proprietary and self-eights of ownership: the necessary work and compromise within a small and rarefied community has the potential to galvanize the group’s pride in its shared enterprise. The extended owners of a dancelstyle may wish to keep its performance within their sole control, whereas the composer (ego inflated by the flattering attentions of other sides) may be most willing to share her genius with the world at large. And the propriety extended owners are probably right; the further a work travels from its initial performance, the greater the likelihood of change, dilution, and reinterpretation. The well-intended teaching efforts of some former team members, separated by miles and years from their mates and relying on half-remembered tenets, have been known to produce some truly lyrical aberrations of the repertoire. Even the informed dispersal of a dance or style through workshops or the sharing of notation is fairly risky. Once you’ve “given” them the dance, you’ve also allowed them to share (albeit to a lesser moral degree) in the extended ownership of it. Change it they will, molding an outsider’s vision to satisfy the needs of their own community. I might not like it, but this is probably right as well.
A few days before Christmas, I had dinner with a couple of visiting out-of-town sidemates who belong to teams in their hometowns. One of them recounted that the foreman of his home side had decided to teach one of "our" dances, but that he had "improved" the dance with some small but distinctive changes. My friend was outraged and expressed his moral indignation at length. While it was generally agreed that his foreman was indeed a real bonehead, it was also pointed out that such transformation in transmission (while unfortunate) is unavoidable, uncontrollable, and ultimately a part of the artistic process.

Art is produced by dreams and visions, by intense study and careful attention to detail, by divine inspiration and demonic possession—occasionally incorporating unconscious derivation, conscious imitation and outright plagiarism. Sometimes it involves melting down accepted notions and banging the hell out of them to forge a turbocharged bloodstream of the soul. Not all art is good. Though I'm not entirely sanguine about it, I'd like to believe in a sort of aesthetic winnowing—that, over time, the truly brilliant stuff will last and the mediocre will blow away like chaff in the wind. I do believe that however widespread or imitated a dance or style might be, the initiators will always hold a certain definitive role. No one will ever dance "Jockey" as well as TVI, and the elegance of John Dexter's vision of Sherborne will always be best realized by Bouwerie.

The side with which I dance has seldom, in its 24 years, performed contemporary dances composed by "outsiders," preferring instead our own interpretations of the "traditional" repertoire and compositions authored by members of the team. An exception to this occurred in the late 1970s, when we requested and received permission to perform a couple of the fine Duddington-style compositions that came out of the vicinity of Belgrade Lakes, Maine. We were provided with explicit personal instruction and written notation of both dance and music, with the proviso that we publicly credit performances with the announcement "A dance that was made up in a barn in the grand old state of Maine." Corny, perhaps, but succinct and ...
appropriate. Within the private lore of our side, we knew the story of how these dances were created and by which individuals. Public acknowledgment of a dance can be very sticky. Maintaining the composer by name is generally cloying, embarrassing, and of little interest to a general audience. Public acknowledgment of a dance can be very sticky. Mentioning the composer by name is generally cloying, embarrassing, and of little interest to a general audience. While it should have been retired years ago, the lame, old "From the village of . . ." does serve to acknowledge the ownership of anonymous traditional compositions. What’s more important, though, is to inculcate within the team a sense of the origin and derivation of the dance. The more you know, the better you are able to produce an interpretation that is resonant with the original essence of the work. With composed dances, the composer is obviously the best source of this information. Undirected learning from straight notation and videotape lacks the potential for acquiring vital nuances, shades, and currents. Moreover, one of the few truly traditional aspects of this revival lies in the oral transmission of teaching—a human continuum of cherished knowledge.

I think a lot of the folks involved in this revival feel yet another, more general, sense of ownership—that of the caretaker. Most dancers have expended considerable time and energy on this art form/hobby. While not, by and large, a primary motivation, the sense of preserving something of value is compelling, whether directed toward maintaining historical forms, or just doing something old in a new way. With this can come very strong feelings of responsibility and proprietorship. While the mechanisms of what is appropriate or "right" will vary tremendously from context to context, I think most teams try their best to honor a tradition that they cherish. It is, however, surprising how many sides are virtually ignorant of the sources of their repertoire, contemporary or "traditional." A number of traditional sides have requested that their dances not be performed by others. They are certainly the creators of and heirs to a largely unbroken, living tradition; their request is justified, valid, and not at all unreasonable. Paradoxically and without disrespect, the side with which I dance chooses not to honor that request. Though we generally raise the ceremonial formalities of ownership to an almost religious degree, we do publicly perform the dances of one of these traditions. There is no moral justification. We truly love the dances and feel that we perform them well and honor them within the context of our fairly insular community. Admittedly, there is a mischievous sense of bad boys eating forbidden fruit; we call them "secret" dances. And we do feel a strong sense of "outlaw"
ownership—as partners in crime—that serves to galvanize our often jaded performances. Of course, our twisted ownership shrinks to imperceptibility when placed next to the real one. We have no valid excuse or rationalization for stealing these dances, but that there are some golden, evanescent truths that transcend logic, wisdom, and conventional ethics. In short, some things just are.

Ultimately, it seems to me, the dance belongs to everyone who respects and cherishes it. But not by any means equally, nor in any-where near the same context. Yet is the degree of control and responsibility inherent in these ownerships always the same? It's not necessarily something that can be charted in a cumulative, linear way: It is, I think, better perceived as a kind of continuum with myriad random flashes of light. Some are blindingly brilliant, others merely bright. And most barely shine at all.
Can there be ownership of morris music? What follows is less an objective analysis than a personal viewpoint. To answer the question up front, I suggest the answer should almost always be no; the music should be essentially in the public domain, or at least the domain of those of us interested in using it for morris purposes. This answer has significant implications for expanding the morris music repertoire—which has been rather overlooked in comparison to dance and tradition development.

Certainly many morris teams in North America and elsewhere, utilize the traditional repertoire of tunes found in Lionel Bacon's compilation, and generally (not always) use them for the dances with which they are associated in Bacon. I don't expect anyone would argue that those tunes are owned by anyone; they are truly of the tradition. We owe a great debt to their publication, which has enabled the tunes and dances to be more widespread than they would otherwise have been; one negative side effect, I would point out, is that the printed versions of the tunes have, in some quarters, become invested with an authenticity which discourages change or innovation (which surely must have been part of the tradition as well)—but that's a subject for another issue.

I find it disappointing that few teams have attempted to expand the morris music repertoire in any significant way, while at the same time inventing or adapting dances is a major focus of many sides. New morris music rarely seems to be created, unless it is linked to the creation of a new dance. Yet historically there is abundant evidence that many traditions had identical steps and figures performed to more than one tune (what most of us would consider the same dance performed to different tunes) which were considered by the side to be different dances. The clearest example of this in Bacon is probably Bampton, with its numerous sidestep and half-hay dances, but a look through Roy Dommett's notes should convince you there are many more.

I suggest this is a real opportunity for dance invention that seldom involves major questions of ownership, whether the music is newly composed or not. For instance, many of us on the
West Coast were privileged to see as one of Hammersmith Morris Men's show dances at the California Ale last year a Bampton sidestep dance, essentially as notated in Bacon, performed to a Swedish tune that fits the dance perfectly. (In the past HMM has used other non-traditional tunes for this sidestep sequence, such as one of Walter Bolbe's polkas, which also works well). Does HMM own the tune, then? Certainly not as authors, and not unless one may own the idea to match a dance and tune. And even if I am willing to grant them this degree of ownership, does this mean I could not use the tune for an Adderbury stick dance (say)? Surely not!!

What about a newly composed tune? I have some experience with this, insomuch as I wrote a tune when with Ann Arbor SSS to use for the dance Willow Tree (Bucknell). As it turned out, Ravenswood Morris liked the tune as well, and they adapted it for an Ilmington stick dance that was a staple in their repertoire for a while. I frankly don't remember if anyone from Ravenswood asked my permission to use the tune—I suspect they did—but in any case I wouldn't have denied them its use. To me the idea of taking a tune, whatever its provenance, that is in use for morris and using it for a different dance is perfectly reasonable and should be encouraged. (Plus it has the benefit to the composer of increasing the opportunities for the tune to be used!)

There have been a number of news items recently concerning enforcement of copyright claims in realms where these issues have generally been ignored. The most publicized was probably a brief attempt to claim royalties from those youngsters (Girl Scouts and the like) who sing camp songs at summer camps, but we should not ignore the loss of the Digital Tradition database of folk songs on the Web—pulled because of copyright concerns. [The Digital Tradition is back on the Web again, at least for now, hosted by the Mudcat Cafe and found at <http://www.deltablues.com/>—Ed.] In England more than one folk festival has canceled the traditional jam session/song swap in the pub because of the complexity and cost of adhering to the performance license (copyright) regulations as they are currently being interpreted and enforced.

Fortunately the morris world has remained outside these legal wrangles and, hopefully, will continue to do so. I might advise caution, though, or at least awareness of the potential concerns, if you are a team that uses an easily recognizable, clearly in copyright tune for a dance you are going to perform at a major public venue... especially
if it's, shall we say, not attended by your standard easygoing mix of folks? But generally, we are in the position—envious yet difficult—to make our own rules about the music we use for morris!!

How should we address this responsibility? Well, if I can be so grandiose as to offer some personal opinions as guidelines (and the other editors said I should!); give freely, with few exceptions (and understand why you make them when you do); be honest in taking/borrowing/thieving tunes or ideas (the folk process?) as well as in properly crediting those with whom they originated; and, crucially, be cognizant of the complexity of the feelings and attitudes that arise and honestly evaluate your response to them. (That is not to say that you will always comply with the wishes of those who disagree with you, but you should at least examine those wishes.)

What exceptions to giving freely would I make, as a composer of tunes? I can envision some instances when valid issues and feelings of possession of a tune may arise—for instance, a memorial dance, or dance and tune written for or associated with a particular place and/ or event, which a team feels has special meaning to it alone. (I think this is what Tony is saying [see "Be It Ever So Traditional," pg. 27] about Barrows House, as well as the Abingdon men about their dances; they consider themselves curators, not owners, of the Abingdon village traditions.) Otherwise, I am a strong advocate of collective ownership, or non-ownership, where morris music is concerned. As a musician for Mayfield, of course I enjoy playing a tune I wrote for one of our dances, but I'm equally excited to play the version of Elaine Bradtke's "Maiden's Choice"—a wonderful tune that we use for an Ascot adaptation of the Oddington dance written to it. Both morris, Elaine's old team, is gone, but the music continues!!
I am reminded of a wonderful children's book written by a fourteen-year-old girl, titled *Who Owns the Sun?* In this story, a small child asks his father who owns the sun, the stars, the flowers in the field. The father always replies that they are owned by no one; they were created for all to enjoy, and they stand alone. The child later discovers that his father, a black slave, is owned by a white man, and the child can't understand how this can be. It can't be, and it never should have been.

And we ask, who owns the dance?

The first thing I find myself wondering is what constitutes ownership? Creation? Do parents own their children? If an artist creates a painting and then sells it for one million dollars, who owns the painting? Do the buyers, or do they simply own the right to look at that painting wherever and whenever they wish? The painting is still called a Picasso or a Rembrandt. If I bought it, it would not become a Horton.

And then I ask another question: What is the purpose of ownership? Native Americans did not believe in owning land. They just used it. When their claims on the land's use became tenuous, their livelihood became threatened and they fought for their survival. When we talk about owning Picassos or Rembrandts, I think it is more a matter of greed and lust than survival; but when we talk about dances, the issue becomes a little more cloudy.

In England, morris sides abound. They are everywhere, interfering with each other's territory and stealing each other's traditions. I suspect stealing has always been a part of the ritual. Since style and innovation won teams the right to perform at county fairs, sides were always on the lookout for ways to shine. If one side found a glorious tune, why then it was usually taken up by other sides in short order. When a team member moved from one village to another, he may have started a new side, and we can make a safe guess that the tradition danced was based on the best things they recalled from the old side.

So, who owns the dance?
Marlboro Morris and Sword has nearly 40 dances in its repertoire. Not including the seven clog routines (traditional steps choreographed by us, except for Pat Tracey’s Old Lancs), the only traditional dance we do is Cuckoo’s Nest. The rest of our dances have been composed by us or reconfigured to fit the demands of the side (i.e., doing the Nelson’s Praise jig for three or six and in a new shape). Who owns our dances?

Perhaps I should go back one step further. What we dance is not even traditional. Our style is based on Ilmington notes and on suggestions from both Tony Barrand and Roy Dommett. The capers we developed ourselves. So, when we talk about ownership of dances in our team, the issue becomes doubly loaded. Is it the dance or the tradition? And can they always be separated?

I would like to be a free and generous spirit and to say that all the dances are for everyone and that anyone is more than welcome to take what we do and use it. And, in a way, I do feel that is true. Once the dance is performed for the public, it becomes part of the public’s domain. The style we have developed over the 22 years of our existence is particular to us. Another side could take the basic ideas with which we begin, even our general aesthetics, and still come up with something very different. That is part of the beauty of this world—different ways of viewing the same problem. If, however, a side took a video of us and studied it carefully so they could do exactly what we were doing, with the goal to clone us, I think we would all feel robbed of our specialness and cheated. (I say this with much guilt in my heart, because for 21 years we have been performing the Handsworth Sword Dance, very much based on Handsworth’s style, even
though we knew we were not welcome to it. However, in our defense, the past 12 or so years have been spent trying to make changes in the dance to make it more our own. We have mostly used the dance in our own villages as part of a local yearly tradition, and we would also probably not take that dance to England.)

The composed dances we do are another story. Many of the dances we perform are what I like to call "extensions" of the larger morris tradition. Where several other traditions had a "Trunkles" and Ilmington did not, we created one to fit our style. But when we had explored most of those routes, we began to feel a different urge: one to create. Several of our original dances have been pirated by other sides and made to fit their own styles, and while we publicly (and good-naturedly) "huff" when we see one of our ideas "stolen", we are also privately pleased that it was a good enough idea to steal.

We do not, however, feel that way about the molly we are developing. When we went to England in 1988 we saw some dancing that left us breathless: molly dancing. We knew nothing about it except that it was different and exciting and that it had a world of possibilities we had never before considered. Seven Champions, men with a serious carriage, blackened faces, and heavy steps, dancing on ancient cobblestones in "the Oldest Village in England" to a single unaccompanied voice evoked a feeling of being part of something that was much larger than ourselves, it was reverent (and irreverent) and deep. Ermine Street, women who danced to one of the best
mellodramatic players in the world (Rod Stradling) in sets of any number other than 6, in any colors other than white, with masks and white ribbons, and with taps on the bottoms of their sneakers, were light, spirited, and mysterious and made us want to get up and dance with them. We took these two impressions home with us and set out to create a tradition of our own, one that would address all sides of what we felt while viewing molly in England.

We have worked long and hard on this—and since we could not remember how any of their dances went, we had to start from the beginning, making up our own. And we do feel very precious about these. For now, because it is so new and we are still working it all out, to pass it on does not seem right. To have someone else just learn something in one afternoon that we have worked on for years does not feel good. Molly is such a new thing in America, and we are proud to be on the cutting edge. It is special because it is different. And, for now, we are unwilling to share that. Call it ego, insecurity, or selfishness. Yes. That's what it is. And we are guilty.

Who owns the dance?

In truth, even though we may have created the molly dances we do, as soon as someone else sees them or captures them on videotape, they will be out of our hands. People will do what they will no matter how we feel. And we will not own them anymore. As soon as someone else sees what you do, you share the ownership. The viewer takes a part by having a response, and that is ownership. Art is owned by everyone who remembers it, talks about it, keeps the pictures in their memory, writes about it. And in fact, what is ever actually "owned"?

I don't think anybody owns the dance. I believe there are many reasons why sides and artists wish to hold on to what they have created, so that they will continue to be the only ones doing it. That singularity makes them unique, special, desirable, and interesting, and who does not want to have these traits? If there were copyright issues, people would want to hold on to their creations to receive their due, either money or respect. People want their egos fed and their positions in society to remain secure. They want to survive in a hostile world. That is why we hold on to things.

Wouldn't it be nice to be able to let go and see what happens? In the meantime, all we can hope for is that people will respect the work that others have put into their dances and that credit will be given when it is due.

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Be It Ever So Traditional, There's No Place Like Colne:
A Morris Dance Publisher's Cautionary Tale

Anthony G. Barrand, Ph.D.
Boston University, January, 1997

In the summer of 1990, John Roberts and I were in Memphis singing at an International Children's Festival. We were asked to do a morris dance show with a team of youngsters from St. Louis. We did a jig and then three of the children got up to do their first dance, starting in a triangle formation. The musician played the opening measures of "Over the Hills and Far Away" and I realized they were doing a version of one of my team's invented dances, The Barrows House.

"Where did you learn that?" "From a video of three Marlboro Men dancing it at Pinewoods Camp last summer."

I confess that, despite a firm philosophical belief that any performance done in a public space is literally in the public domain and fair game, I had to struggle with the feelings of a treasured possession being taken from me without permission and with no credit given. Of course, it only sort of looked like my dance. These children didn't look anything like the Marlboro Men, and anyone less familiar with both performances might not have recognized any similarity beyond the triangular shape—which is not, in any case, unique to the dance. But the feelings were still there.

I think these feelings of ownership are an important part of the human condition, an essential ingredient of the grails we take in our achievements. They do not, however, necessarily translate into a justification for litigious action. Sharp met dancers from many teams who were happy for him to spread the word and the details of their most precious forms of expression. He also encountered teams who were not eager for him to publish and either wouldn't meet with him or gave him erroneous information so that they hadn't completely given away their dance.

Perhaps because of the litigious nature of contemporary society, a new line has been crossed. There are now teams who seek actively to prevent others from acquiring the information necessary to perform their dance(s). My experience with the phenomenon spring...
from my publication of Roy Dommett's notations of dances from Colne in Lancashire. This is a complex story. I hope that sharing my recent encounters may make some contribution towards bettering our understanding of the issues. Resolution may be too much to ask for.

The Tale

Where does one learn dances? From a few books that contain notations, from classes, from watching other teams, and from manuscripts or people who have studied them. This is what I did, including field trips to England filming dance performances and visiting selected team practices.

Most useful, however, in exposing me to the vast range of dancing extent in England were a pile of typewritten and mimeographed notes prepared by the man who became my dance mentor, Roy Leonard Dommett. I spent the summer of 1984 editing and organizing a collection (about 3000 pages) of Dommett's archival and instructional notes. In five volumes as Roy Dommett's Morris Notes, they include essays on aspects of the morris, hand-copied manuscripts and field notes from various collectors, and notations of a wide variety of dances.

Some history of how Dommett made these notes is relevant here. In about 1955, while he and two of his sons were dancing with the Abington Traditional Morris Dancers, Dommett began filming as much morris as he could, documenting all of the contemporary display dance repertoire, making notations from these recordings, and drawing together as many previously existing dance descriptions as he could. His agenda was clear and public, and it became well-known to document and make available details of the full range of English seasonal dance customs. My experience of him working in the field was that permission to film was always obtained and that people were never in doubt as to his intentions for the material. The impact of his talks, film presentations, and dance workshops was immense. The information in the notes he handed out at his presentations and mailed on request nourished and supported a rich and solid revival and restoration of many kinds of seasonal display dancing in England. It is interesting that only one group (Chipping

Campden) in Dommett's collection requested that a claim of copyright be attached to his descriptions of their dances.

As I understand it, Dommett was assisted at many of his instructional sessions in the 1960s and early 1970s by other zealots who were also exploring the memories of old, former dancers in order to record and restore the venerable once-thriving seasonal customs. One of these co-workers was Julian Pilling, who collected information about several dance traditions in the counties of Lancashire and Cheshire. By about 1975, when it had become clear that there was a burgeoning interest in establishing new teams in communities throughout England and America, Dommett and Pilling went in opposite philosophical directions. Pilling declared that the materials he and Dommett had been previously freely sharing and teaching should be restricted to use exclusively within the immediate communities in which they were collected; Dommett continued to feel that the survival of the dance traditions would be best served by descriptive information being made openly available.

A few partial sets of the notes made it to this country in the 1970s, as Dommett came to the U.S. regularly on business and did dance workshops and lectures on the side. I decided to make a definitive set after discovering that people were making 4th- or 5th-generation copies of his notes without knowing their source. Dommett encouraged me, collaborated closely with me and made sure I had a copy of everything. The five-volume sets of reprints were only offered for sale via outlets connected with the Country Dance and Song Society (cdss), except when I have sold copies at occasional dance conferences and teaching sessions in England. Roy felt that there were plenty of copies of his notes available over there. He continued to provide specific items on request and issued new notes as he gave workshops. The raw condition of the descriptions (they are, after all, just photocopies of notes) has pretty much limited the circulation to morris dance specialists.

Dommett's activities and notes have always been controversial in some quarters, primarily because of his approach of assigning equal importance to the contemporary performance practice of so-called revival and traditional teams. In documenting the new teams as well as the few dance groups with more-or-less continuous performance history since the nineteenth century, he flouted the almost-holy reverence with which these groups had been regarded. Most, myself included, felt that Dommett had opened a window on an improperly
closed room made unnecessarily stuffy. Others, including Mr. Pilling, disagreed.

He evidently learned of the existence of an American edition of Dommett's notes in the fall of 1994 after one of his Colne Royal team members (Alan Seymour) had visited the U.S. to teach at a dance camp and purchased a copy. He was shocked to discover descriptions of two dances, Colne and Colne Royal, with Julian Pilling listed as the collector. While on tour over here, this man had declined to teach the Colne dance in any way—even at a workshop with one team that includes a dance they call Colne Royal in their repertoire. He stated it was team policy not to teach or publish the dance.

On returning to England, the Colne Royal dancer showed the Dommett volume to the team. Julian Pilling wrote to cws, suggesting that they had infringed on his intellectual property rights by reprintsing Dommett's notes of dances on which he, Pilling, had originally collected information. This act, he suggested, transgressed accepted codes and might be an infringement of British law. He commented the Morris Ring's publication of A Handbook of Morris Dances by way of comparison. It showed, he suggested, respect for the wishes of teams who claimed similar rights for their repertoire. Two teams (Abingdon and Chipping Campden) requested that descriptions of their dances not be included in the collection. They were, Pilling implied, thereby protected from becoming what he called "display fodder."

Brad Foster, the Director of cws, consulted with dance scholars and legal advisors and tentatively concluded that Dommett's descriptions were fair use under U.S. copyright law. The views of the American teams were considered in the decision. 

3. I assume this pejorative phrase refers to a dance being performed outside of the traditional legitimate location by a group other than those who have inherited it. In its most extreme interpretation, this dismisses most morris teams as merely purveyors of display fodder.
tions of public performances had long ago passed into the public domain, and, in any case, Dommett had given full permission for the reprinting. While the notes may have broken taboos and bruised egos, they broke no laws. Nevertheless, Pilling’s letter had a distinct impact for, as the Dommett volumes went out of stock, CDSS was, for a time, too wary to reprint them.

In January, 1995, I wrote at length to Pilling, arguing in detail why I thought the English dance customs were well-served by full disclosure. I pointed out that Dommett’s descriptions of Colne Royal and Colne were based on two sources: first, detailed instructions Pilling gave at Halsway Manor classes with Roy Dommett and, second, film which Dommett took, with Pilling’s permission, of the Colne Royal team dancing. Pilling wrote back rejecting my arguments. He suggested that I put a desire for scholarly completeness ahead of the wishes of traditional teams. I suggested the need to make the debate open and public, although Pilling implied (and still does) that there is no room for discussion on the issues involved here. More response came through several letters from a man I did not know (C.P. Clarke), who had seen my letters to Pilling.

Clarke escalated the rhetoric, highlighting the vivid emotional stakes. Publishing the notations, he suggested, was depriving him of his English heritage. One morris dancer who learned of it, he wrote, felt as though he had been raped. He called my actions racist because dance performances such as those in the streets of Colne were not given the same deference which he thought would be afforded Native American tribes and their dancing.

Finally, Mr. Clarke wrote that publishing Colne and other traditional dances constituted exploitation for academic purposes. Mr. Clarke took it seriously enough to write to the Provost at Boston University, complaining about my use of these traditional materials. After consulting with counsel, the Provost replied to him that free performances in the street and Dommett’s widely-circulated descrip-

6. I suggested in reply that the man contact a rape counselor to see if his feelings were really comparable.
7. I’m not sure what this means since there are films and descriptions of the public display dances readily available. While many of the dances and ceremonies are a part of community life, they are also now money-making and public relations events. The most sacred dances and ceremonies are never open to the public, and are only performed by and for those who will understand and participate in the meaning.

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tions of them seemed clearly in the public domain. There was no more correspondence at this point.

There are still deeply held feelings—but people on both sides of an argument can have them. I came across an example of this last year (1996) while pulling Ivor Allsop’s sword dance notations together into book form.6 Ivor, a former Squire of the Morris Ring, had obtained permission to include a notation from all of the teams he considered traditional except for Handsworth, a team he had danced with for several years. Ivor was also told by a team official that he could not include the set of tunes that Handsworth currently uses; Ivor felt strongly that he could, since he had been part of a small group of three that put the set together. I was told in a letter by the same team officer that it had been Harry Pitts’ (the long-time team captain) last wish that the dance not be published; Harry’s son, John, on the other hand, was very supportive of the project. A description of the dance as it had been performed when Ivor was on the team was eventually included.

**Reflecting on the Issues**

There is, in fact, a slew of points that merit extended discussion, some of them emotional, some legal, some philosophical, and some empirical or practical in nature. What rights should a morris or sword team or individuals on that team have to prevent others from performing a dance derived from their repertoire? Does it make a difference if the team or the dance is traditional? If I make a description or notation of their dance, can or should they be able to prevent me from publishing it? What rights does the collector have? The issues are fraught ones tinged with questions about ownership, legality, ethics, courtesy, aesthetics, fairness, the concept of tradition, and the nature of the teaching/learning process. They are loaded with personal and emotional consequences and feelings of regional and even national pride. Most of these questions have rarely been asked, let alone answered. Questions about copyright simply never arose about matters around which there was no financial gain, such as folk dancing.


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Such questions, once raised—as they have been, for example, by this issue—are now potentially a concern of every morris dancer. I see seven areas of interest revealed in the story of my own first-hand encounter.

1. Money, Control, or Just Credit?

Copyright is a claim. It is a necessary but not a sufficient condition that the claim be formally made. Such a claim must be substantial. It has no substance if the property and its components (such as corners cross, up-street, or polka) have passed into the public domain. Claims of copyright have not, for the most part, been made. Two things are gained by a legitimate claim: money and control.

If I own copyright, I can claim a share of any money made from use, and I can charge royalties or some other fee. A share of the debt would be more appropriate for folk dance projects. In morris dance circles, if any money changes hands it is in small amounts.

If I own copyright, I can control who gets permission to use the material in the first place—but eventually that control is lost after the time limit is passed. The D'Oyly Carte Company had exclusive rights to perform the Gilbert and Sullivan operas until the copyright ran out and they passed into the public domain. But Gilbert and Sullivan clearly created the material. Should someone who learned a dance from someone who might have learned it from yet someone else be able to prevent another person from dancing it? With a team dance, who gets to give or deny permission? Consider the Handsworth case described above. Who had the right to give or deny permission: the team official acting with or without broad team approval; Ivor Allsop or any other person who danced on the team for many years; or Harry Pitts' son?

It needs to be noted, though, that the Library of Congress adopts a highly cautious standard that is common in contemporary folkloric practice: Nothing is used in any form of publication without the explicit permission of anyone who might have any claim to the material. This amounts to a single person having veto power. It might work fine in classic one-on-one private interview situations, but it is far from clear that it is feasible or appropriate in the case of a public display of a morris dance that has been filmed or annotated.

But there are two other rights which go with either ownership or some other creative connection to the property, and these have more to do with propriety than legality.
First, the owner or a group involved in creating or otherwise shaping a dance also has the right for attribution of credit. This is indisputable. It is legally required in cases where the copyright holder has given permission; more often than not in folk performance genres, credit is acknowledged even in cases where permission is not required or sought. For example, most singers introduce a song by telling an audience who wrote it and from whom it was learned. I think this is the respect many morris teams pay when they introduce a dance as 'from the village of ...' 9

Second, in this climate, it is polite, politic, and wise to notify the creator/owner if some item to which they have some attachment is about to be used. Ultimately, these latter two points are probably the most significant with regard to the world of morris dancing, since claims of copyright are few and far between and, with no money involved, ASCAP and BMI are unlikely to police intellectual property usage.

2. The Feeling of Ownership for What One Dances and/or Collects

I understand and have great appreciation and admiration for Pilling's obvious pride in and love for the Colne repertoire and the team's performance. They dance like no one else I've ever seen. There is a powerful sense of ownership that goes with developing and maintaining a reliable display dance repertoire in one's life and community. When one has also been lucky enough to be in a position to receive knowledge from a tradition bearer, as has Pilling, the connection to the dance is multiply reinforced. I, too, know the joys, affections, and anguish that go with creating and being part of a thriving, community-based seasonal dance tradition that has been drawn upon by other teams.

I have also been fortunate enough to be entrusted with the responsibility of collecting repertoire from aging dancers. Pilling and I disagree, however, on what the rights and responsibilities are—and to whom they go—when one has been privileged to learn and adopt a traditional dance. As the dancing begins to fit into one's life and the lives of people in the community, one becomes, I suggest, a tradition-bearer, and the dance is as much theirs (the audience's) as yours. Unlike the Elgin Marbles, which the British Museum has but which...
the Greek government wants returned to the Parthenon, there is no limit to who can take possession of the morris gift.

3. What Is the Role of the Collector?

For me, the collector is what one might call a medium whose job is to learn as accurately as possible what the source knows, to pass the tradition on by making sure that others who were not privileged to be there learn what you have learned, to give it new life in one's own time, and to provide for generations to come. Traditions that can last and have lasted through several generations are sturdy and durable. If the collector who has the knowledge can become a role model in the performance of the dance to the satisfaction of the informant(s), so much the better. Pilling was like this in the early years when he led the Manchester Morris Men into the north-west repertoire and taught Colne at Halway Manor classes. In the 1950s, as I understand it, when he began visiting old dancers and collecting their memories of the details, Pilling was a member of the Manchester Morris Men— who were, at the time, dancing Cotswold morris. He taught them the dances and then wanted them to switch to dancing the local repertoire exclusively. They said no, and he left to start his own group in Colne, a suburb of Manchester.

There are hints in his letters, however, that he now thinks of his role not as a model but as property owner, a guardian of some delicate thing that needs to be protected from contamination by people who will make of it something he disparagingly calls display fodder. Whether it's fodder or something else, however, the dance has to be created by the performers from a restricted set of instructions, and the mischief, of course, is in the process of filling in the parts left out by the description. This leads to my key point.

4. A Description Is Not a Dance

Roy Dommett's Morris Notes are just what they purport to be and nothing more: notes. It is a collection not of dances but of written, schematic descriptions, primarily of films of dances. A description is fixed once made; a dance is as much an active, living creature as are (and because off) its performers. As I have seen many times in my dance classes at Boston University, two people making separate descriptions of the same performance can come up with drastically different accounts. Similarly, two groups of people starting with the same set of instructions will (even must) produce totally different dances. Even a group trying hard to look just like another produces something noticeably different from the original.
Further, the same group of people performing a single dance over time changes that dance, sometimes in subtle and sometimes in drastic ways. This is fundamental and just as true of a traditional side as any other. I can't imagine that an experienced dance teacher could fail to know that it is no small task to go from a set of written instructions to some performance of them and then to go from that to something with style that is worthy of presentation to the public.

Roy's notes were produced using his time, money, and effort; copyright on the notations (the intellectual property, if you prefer that oxymoron) is his. I don't believe Roy ever made any secret of his intentions with regard to asking permission to film. He has been producing and circulating copies of his notes for four decades, and they have been in-describably important in providing resources for all the people eager to join the amazing dance revival that has happened in the post-war years.

Dommett's goal was to document, encourage, and facilitate the full range of the English display dance repertoires. The notes were an indispensable contribution to the wealth of dance activity that was spawned in the latter half of this century. The Halsway Manor weekends, in which Pilling participated and at which he freely taught the Colne Royal dances in far more detail than were captured in Roy's notes, were another.

5. What's at Stake Here?

Money clearly isn't the issue. This is not a case like that of the Kingston Trio's recording of "Dan Dooley." That song was collected by Frank Warner from Frank Proffitt, who had it from his family, and it became a big hit for an extended period. Warner issued a counter claim of copyright, sued, and won, but after the song was much less popular, no back damages were awarded. Warner and Proffitt shared some money, therefore, but missed the main pile. Copyright clearly has a place when there is money changing hands.


1. I think it needs to be said, though, that Frank Proffitt's version of the song would not have made money for anyone. I like it a lot but it was not, as they say, commercial.
In any case, Pilling does not seem interested in royalties from people who dance Colne Royal as display fodder. He wants them to stop doing it altogether and leave the dance with a singular existence in its original location. The genie, however, is long out of the bottle—and Pilling contributed more than did Dommett to its escape. Morris dancers have always stolen ideas from each other. Video tape changes only the speed with which the genie can find the door. How do you think the first guy who thought up “Trunkles” felt once everyone started doing it? Probably much the way Julian Pilling does. The sources of these feelings are real and need to be understood, but they are not the final arbiter.

Credit by attribution is a legitimate concern. In hindsight, Roy probably could have added more information to some of his typed sheets when they were first prepared and circulated (some of them 20-30 years ago), though I note that the Colne account lists J. Pilling, collector. Most of them were used, however, in situations where Roy was teaching, showing film, and lecturing—and, judging by sessions I have been in, passing on more information than most people could assimilate, including where and from whom the original information came and who did the leg work.

I perhaps should have added annotations to the notes when I was organizing them (1984), but after I saw multi-generation photocopies of the notes being passed around among people who had no idea where they came from, it seemed urgently necessary to organize them as they were so Roy could get the credit for the important resource he was providing. The 1980s was a time when there were unprecedented numbers of people eager to fit seasonal display dancing of some sort into their lives. Where Sharp’s collection and publications and a few manuscript sources were sufficient to inspire and nurture an earlier generation of dancers, that crop were looking to explore all of the wonders of English morris and sword. Dommett’s notes met their needs. Some of the work he did with the South Midlands Morris created dances where there was only fragmentary information, and other notes documented the full range of the repertoire from a single location that had only been partially represented by Sharp’s publications.

14. For example, Oddington, Bessels Leigh; Vol. I Part 2, pp. 454-459.
15. For example, Bampton, Longborough; Vol. I Part 2, pp. 245-248, 426-437.
What Damage Has Been Caused by Publication?

Speaking of Sharp raises the most important question for me about the underlying issues raised by Pilling: What is to be feared about publication? Has any damage been caused? I confess I have never understood why some teams seek so strenuously to avoid an account of their dancing being available, and I would argue that it is an abuse of a privilege to do so. In that light, it was a mistake not to make Lionel Bacon's A Handbook of Morris Dances a complete accounting. Teams inevitably go through cycles of activity, dormancy, and revival, but I know of no evidence that publication of dance information for a team has been responsible for the dissolution of the custom in the local area. Was the custom of dancing at Abingdon and Chipping Campden really in danger compared, say, with Headington Quarry or Bampton?

How has publication for most of this century damaged Bampton or Headington? Thousands dance Bampton or Headington repertoire, but who does it as well as the three Bampton teams or the Quarry men? How have Grenoside, Handsworth, or Granley (Tony?) been damaged by Sharp's or Karpeles' publications? How, given that my edition of Roy's Notes has been available for 10 years and many of the actual notes available for 20-30 years, have they damaged Bacup, Campden, Colne, or Abingdon? Teams that dance in one place for many years have a quality that cannot be imitated by a team from another location.

It is very special, for example, to see the Headington Quarry Men dance what they learned from William Kimber. The lineage is visible; that is what they possess, and it gives their dancing that special quality without a name. No one else has what they have. They have the streets, the sounds and smells, the stories Kimber told them and the way he told them, the built-in feel of the tunes we all know so well from Kimber's recordings, and on and on. No publication, no one else dancing what they might call Headington, can take that away. This is also true at Bampton, at Grenoside, at Chipping Campden, at Bacup, at Abingdon, at Colne, and at many other locations, some of which have newer and less heralded claims to traditional blood lines. Traditions depend not upon age but on the ways they capture and express a complex web of interactions between a place; a time; the people who lived and still live there; the dancers and musicians who create, recreate, and maintain the celebrations; and a whole host of contributing factors.

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Where a team with claims to that complex label, tradition, has clearly asked that their dance not be done (for example, at Chipping Campden or Abingdon), other teams have not adopted these dances as part of their public display. This is the respect I think Pilling should be talking about. It’s so powerful that it almost qualifies as a taboo, and it would be there whether or not some description of the dance is published.

The Colne Royal lineage, I think, is also untouched. I defy Pilling to think of another team that looks anything like his, even if there are teams that dance something they call Colne Royal. There is certainly no other team that dances in Colne and is seen by the residents as belonging to their town. The Manchester Morris Men I filmed in 1979 didn’t look like Colne Royal, and it was, after all, Pilling who taught them.

A good example, I think, of over-caution by a scholar and abuse of privilege by a team anxious not to be copied was the excellent study of the dances from the Bacup region of Lancashire by my friend, Dr. Tess Buckland. In a discussion of the choreographic aspects of the dance, she writes: “Respect for the Britannia dancers’ wish that their tradition not be imitated prohibits a full notation of the dance here.”

I see two problems with this and think that more effort should have been made to get the Bacup dancers comfortable with the idea of publishing a notation: first, there is a huge distance between the Bacup dancers’ request not to be imitated and the reasonable need of readers of a scholarly dance article to know more information than is afforded by broad descriptions; and, second, why shouldn’t there be other groups performing Bacup-like dances? It doesn’t seem to have harmed the dancing in Bampton for there to have been two teams since the 1920s and three for the last two decades. The article itself points out that there used to be several teams in the Bacup area. Suppose a group wanted to form a team in Rawtenstall or Cloughfold? Where else than Bacup would they look for ideas?

In my more romantic moments (and all morris dancers have them), I think of tradition as similar to the Olympic flame: No one owns it; a lucky few get to carry it for a while, but then it is passed on.

7. What Is the Value of Publication?

The Sharp, Bacon, Dommett and Allsop notes enable dancers with scholarly or, equally importantly, aesthetic interests to see and feel the place of different aspects of the repertoire as parts of the whole. This is a major function of notations: study. I'd be happy to go on at length about this, but since perhaps 99 percent of morris dancers would in all likelihood not now be part of the morris were it not for Sharp's efforts and the various published sources, I probably can hold off on this one. It seems inconsistent to have based one's lifelong passion for a hobby on information published by one person but to refuse to provide for the next generation. Fortunately, passing memories on to the next generation is now much easier. Copying and recording technology is not new or uncommon or at odds with the tradition. Copying and recording devices have become extensions of our perceptual and memory systems. They are useful both for teams caring for a tradition and for those in the throes of establishing one.

General Lessons:

It is usually unsafe to generalize beyond the narrowest of circumstances where things that matter to people are involved. A relatively safe one here, however, is that some people care very much about a dance or a way of dancing that they have. But not everyone concerned may feel the same way. The person with the most intense feeling is not necessarily right but does need to be taken into account with regard to both performance and publication of dance materials. I take the following lessons to heart:

WITH REGARD TO PERFORMANCE:

1. I have always felt and now feel more strongly that teams not privileged to have inherited a repertoire should invent their own dances. To ensure that what one invents is consistent with traditional practice, one probably needs to begin by borrowing choreographic ideas from books and from watching other dancers. Copying is not only a good thing, it is the essence of being alive. At every stage of our lives, we adopt other people as models for our own behavior. We imitate the people we admire, often whether we want to or not.

2. However, if and when you borrow dances or choreographic ideas created or preserved by other groups.

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a) Don't use their name for the dance. The power is in the name. Wars were fought over the names of gods. My Jewish students still write G-d in essays. Give it some name with local reference; that's what the original team did.

b) Don't imitate their costume. My experience is that names and costumes are where most of the emotion resides. I suspect that this is a key issue for Handsworth and Bacup.

3. Remember that even if you try like hell to imitate another team, the key ingredients are to try to imitate how well they dance, rather than what they dance, and to be identified in your community the way they are in theirs.

4. Just as in retail, the three keys to the morris are location, location, and location. Movement style comes from a particular group of people dancing at a particular time in a particular place. Emphasize place. Get it right and the rest follows.

5. The real problem lies not with the notation but with other teams who are happy to borrow rather than invent dances. If you don't want another team to try to copy what you do, either don't give free performances in public, or get the word out that teams should not steal what you do. The latter seems to be effective with the generally considerate people who do morris dancing. A number of teams that have done Colne Royal may need to do some re-thinking right now.

WITH REGARD TO PUBLICATION:

1. In my view, when a group of morris dancers goes out into a public space of their own free will to do a free display, their performance becomes part of the public domain. Making a video recording, however, is qualitatively different from making a written description. It is not illegal to record a public performance without permission, but it might be rude. Generally speaking, though, if you have plans for the tape other than personal use, you should get permission and make your intentions clear.

2. A notation of any sort captures only the choreography. It is a mistake to identify a morris dance performance merely with the choreography. Without the people and the place, even a traditional team is just dancing display fodder.

3. There is no movement notation that completely captures even the choreography of a morris dance performance. A complete Labanotation score can come fairly close, though you wouldn't
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The Abingdon Traditions

Ian White

"A living tradition. Apart from Princess (Prince's) Royal, the dances are unpublished, and the Abingdon dancers prefer that they remain so."

So begins page 1 of Bacon's Bible—but those were Bacon's words, not Abingdon's. We welcome this opportunity to tell our own story.

Abingdon-on-Thames is not the Cotswold village you might imagine. It is in the Thames Valley, six miles south of Oxford, which was a very long way from the Cotswolds before the age of the motorcar. Also Abingdon has always been a town, the focal point of its own cluster of outlying villages, and that makes a big difference to the way its traditions have evolved.

The first direct evidence of morris dancing in Abingdon goes back to 1560 when the Churchwarden's Accounts say: "For two dozen [dozen] of Morres belles one shilling." Unfortunately any other records of morris dancing have been sporadic, as with most other doings of ordinary working people. The next notable event was in 1700 when a black ox was roasted at a celebration in the town square. As the day wore on and much beer was drunk (so the story goes), the longstanding hostility between the east and west ends of the town led to a fight over the possession of the horns of the ox. You can imagine the details—and several people have, luridly. Finally a man named Hemmings captured the horns and carried them off to Ock Street at the west end of town. The Hemmings family were morris dancers—and indeed still are, so ever since 1700 the Abingdon Morris have carried the Ock Street Horns as their trophy, mounted on a carved wooden mask of an ox's head.

Another annual custom in Ock Street was a midsummer Horse Fair, where a Mock Mayor would be elected to "rule" over the festivities. The Horse Fair passed away with the horse and cart, but the tradition of electing a Mayor of Ock Street merged with the tradition of morris dancing and has continued to evolve. Today, Abingdon is a substantial town of over 30,000 people, and of course it has an elected Town Council led by the civic Mayor. Even so, the morris dancers organize a formal election every year, complete with printed voting slips and ballot-boxes, so that the people who live in and

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around Ock Street can vote for their own mock Mayor. Abingdon's is not the only mock mayor, but unlike those who only rule for a day or a weekend as a joke, the Mayor of Ock Street has grown to become a respected position which lasts all year until the next Mayor's Day election. The town is rather proud of its "two Mayors," and the civic Mayor now has an important role in the Mayor of Ock Street ceremonies.

Because two traditions have merged, the Mayor of Ock Street also becomes the leader of the Abingdon Traditional Morris Dancers: and so we came to the morris dancing itself. As you can see, the dancing is the third of the interwoven traditions of the Ock Street Horns, the Mayor of Ock Street, and the morris. Whatever happens to one tradition affects all three, and also the town. This gives the Abingdon Traditional Morris Dancers a unique set of responsibilities—and a very different perspective from any other morris side.

There are currently twelve Abingdon dances. We perform them all, but the Abingdon dances are literally the only dances that many of us know—most of us can't even manage a waltz. Only a few of us would describe ourselves as "folkies," and that's mainly for the pleasure of embarrassing the majority who decidedly are not! The majority became morris dancers simply because they knew a friend or workmate who enjoyed it, and that's the only "folk" thing in their lives.

In some people's eyes, all that tradition makes Abingdon a "museum side—but that's not true. The most important characteristic of a living tradition is that it changes; otherwise it would soon be a dead one. We bring in new dances very slowly (the last one was about 15 years ago) and the names of existing dances remain the
same, but the content of the dances continues to change significantly. In some ways tradition makes us resistant to change, yet if everybody agrees about a better way to do an existing dance, we do it the new way and don't look back. A relatively new element is a conscious historical perspective brought about by permanent records of the dancing: first photographs, then sound recording, and now videotape. Although we are now much more aware of what's happening to us, that doesn't seem to make much difference—we're all swept along in the interplay of conservatism, innovation, and chaos. That, as near as we can tell it from the inside looking out, is what it means to be part of a living tradition.

So, finally, why aren't the Abingdon dances published for the general benefit of morris dancing? Maybe, after this short description of the interlinked Abingdon traditions, you'll begin to understand why. Because this isn't only about morris dancing; our responsibilities as dancers are to the town and to all three traditions—not to their past but to their future. A generalized responsibility to "the good of morris dancing" is a post-revival concept, and an important one; but where specific local traditions already exist, they have to come first.

What would happen if we did publish the Abingdon dances? Frankly you wouldn't enjoy all of them. Out of the hundreds of known morris dances, a few of the Abingdon dances stand up with the very best—but be honest now, those would be the only ones...
you'd ever want to perform. Outside of Abingdon, the rest of the
dances would soon be forgotten, leaving the Abingdon Traditional
Morris Dancers as a true museum side. There's no fun in that; we're
only human. Our motivation would go, our dancing would suffer,
and so would the whole complex of traditions. We don't want to risk
that kind of future.

The Abingdon traditions are alive and well, in the environment
where they evolved and belong. We don't own them; one of the
things a long history gives us is a very strong sense that we are only
the current custodians, trying to find a path forward in a complex,
changing world. But we don't want to keep the traditions to our-
selves—we're proud and eager to show them off to everybody. Come
to Abingdon, or anywhere else where we're performing, and see for
yourself.
Lately, as always, there has been a diverse group of topics on the MDDL. We have talked of the best shoes in which to dance; getting older and the pain of arthritis, twisted ankles, sore Achilles' tendons, sprained knees, and not being able to stay up until 3:00 A.M. dancing at ales; mixed vs. single-sex sides; Dr. Who (The "Daemon" episode: in which you can watch Bledington Young Collins being danced); border vs. Cotswold morris and more. As this issue of the AMN deals with dance ownership, I searched the pages of the list for postings pertaining to this.

One of the most fascinating discussions was on the Morris Dance from Abram, which was a perfect mirror of how dances evolve through time, travel, and incorrect reporting in journals.

Julia Schult describes the dance, (which she learned from the Abram Morris Dancers), as the Circle Dance from Abram. In its American incarnation (begun in Minnesota), it is a Cotswold dance, with bells, performed on May Day morning and other special days. Geoff Hughes, leader of Abram Morris Dancers, explains that Abram is not Cotswold, no bells are worn, and it is danced only on the last Saturday in June by the Abram Morris Dancers, a side which exists only to perform this dance on this day according to original tradition. As to the dance being a "gathering, spiritual togetherness sort of thing," Geoff noted "Why else would ... perfectly sane people spend a Saturday in summer dancing ... in front of an audience of, ooh sometimes as many as three people, and repeat it all about 27 times walking several miles between spots."

According to Mr. Hughes, the variations in style are due to Maud Karpeles' notation in the EFDSS Journal, early '30s, calling it a Cotswold dance and using the Circle Dance name to describe the unusual formation. The name stuck, and the dance was taken up by Cotswold teams with bells and hankies. Hopefully, we'll get more information from Julia regarding exact notation. Geoff's notation on the UK version has been published in most morris journals.

There was much talk about music and copyright laws, rights and ownership of dances, and the pirating of dances by unthinking individuals. The general feeling is that though imitation is the sincerest
form of flattery, that doesn't quite make up for the indiscretion of stealing a dance without permission. Fortunately most of us needn't worry about violating copyright laws while performing dances due to the amateur status of all known morris sides.

So be sensitive, ask for the privilege before "adopting" a new dance. In some cases you may be refused permission; there are dances that have a special significance to a team. And give credit where credit is due: an announcement before a performance as to the origin will usually do.

An interesting point from Mike Heaney in England: In the '30s or '40s, the EPDSS had Kimber play all of his morris and country dance tunes in a fresh performance which was then transcribed and recorded, so the EPDSS could then prove its publications, etc., came from that event and were not in breach of copyright of C#'s or Novello's estate. Well, I think it's interesting, and it's my article.

Once again, the issue of morris as a pagan ritual came up. Not that it is danced as such by most sides, but that the perception of morris dance is still linked to fertility, crops, good luck, etc. The question was brought up: if the audience believes this, and enjoys believing it, should that enjoyment be taken away from them? Lots of debate over that view. Many objected most strongly to the "conscious feeding of misinformation to the press ... and the unwitting public" than to the mixing of folk tradition/paganism/historical accuracy. However, one must remember that there are Events Coordinators who flinch (and revoke contracts) at the slightest mention of pagan rituals.

Until next time, I leave you with a few choice lines gleaned from the writings on the MDDL:

"Sometimes the dancers grasp their partners firmly by the buttocks, not unlike the Vancouver Morris Men when they've had a few beers...."

"We must be anxious about the state of our twiddly bits...."

"This morris dancing is supposed to be a fertility thing? However do they expect to get laid wearing clothes like that?"

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POKINGBROOK UNICORN EULOGY

With fond memory and regret
We are sorry to report the loss of our dear friend The Unicorn of Pokingbrook Morris Dancers. Lost in a fire on Solstice night December 21st, 1996, which consumed the garage and workshop at the Squire’s farm, where repairs were being made to its ears. Created and brought to life by JoEllen Bosson of Yorkdale Heights NY in 1975 for its first appearance at the Niskayuna Folk Festival, lived and prospered under the care of numerous Bagperson officers of Pokingbrook, roamed the fields, forests, streets, and parks of the Hudson Valley, and was said to love the dances and be attracted to the sound of bells and the laughter of children. The children loved, tested, and chased the Unicorn whenever it made its silent but merry appearance with the Morris Dancers and they will especially miss its prancing about. I can tell from the many times it hitchhiked in my car that it knew great joy with Pokingbrook and loved the many outings over the last 20 years. Despite the many hazards and dangerous adventures the Unicorn had in its long life—motorcycle rides, encounters with the police, horses, hunting hounds, dairy cows, and sheep—it maintained the dignity and purity we expect from such a loving beast. We do not know all the stories of our friend, so if you can, please share your Unicorn stories with us. We are collecting photos of the Unicorn for placement in the Morris Dancers album, please contribute any you may have. The sacred ashes will be collected and in a ceremony of appropriate grandeur at the winter feast in March, will be scattered on its favorite grazing area.

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Donations and gifts can be made to Pokingbrook Morris Dancers to fund the quest in search of a Unicorn that may be tamed by bells and gentle people.

Sadly but with wonderful memories of our friend, dance companion and spirit.

Sat, 18 Jan 1997
Larry Syzdek,
Squire for Pokingbrook Morris Dancers.
PO Box 3839, Albany, NY 12203-0839
Phone (518) 383-3482
<lly@hallog.asrc.albany.edu>

Pokingbrook Morris is dancing its 23rd year and planning to greet the May with strength and joy.

GREAT RIVER MORRIS

Great River Morris (Minneapolis, Minnesota) is currently celebrating its tenth anniversary. The team was originally founded in 1987 in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, on the banks of the mighty Mississippi by Jeff Mancl, who (with Marvin the Muskie, of course) now lives further upstream. As part of the anniversary celebrations, Great River will appear at the Midwest Ale in Madison, Wisconsin, where the team first danced out ten years ago!!

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Ale News

THE MIDWEST MORRIS ALE

The 1997 Midwest Morris Ale will be based at the Bethel Horizons retreat center near Dodgeville, Wisconsin. This is the location that was used at the 1987 ale, which was notable for being the first Midwest Ale at which all the food was served on schedule! Bethel Horizons does not have much bed space but has ample camping, which is a good deal cheaper. Those who remember 1987 will be happy to learn that the camping area now has hot showers!

The plan for the Ale includes arrival and mass dance practice Friday evening, dancing in Madison during the day on Saturday, a contra dance on Saturday evening, workshops on Sunday morning, dancing in Governor Dodge State Park on Sunday afternoon, and a party on Sunday evening.

We expect the cost of the Ale to be about $70. E-mail and postal flyers will be sent out during February.

E-mail can be sent to: <cjpstott@src.wisc.edu>, and there is a Web site at <http://stott.src.wisc.edu/Ale~~/> which will be updated as information is available. Regular mail should be sent to John Stott, 4631 Hiawatha Drive, Madison, WI 53711.

Vancouver Ale

Vancouver, B.C., will be the location of a Morris Ale Friday, August 22 through Sunday afternoon, August 24. The site will be Camp Alexandra, at White Rock just outside Vancouver, the same site used for the Super Natur’Ale in 1992. The ale will be hosted by Tiddly Cove Morris & Sword, the Vancouver Morris Men, and Britannia Clog.

We invite all morris teams who may be interested in attending the Ale to contact us right away. We shall send more information and registration details when available, to all sides who express interest. Contact information: by mail c/o June Harman, 2569 Marine Drive, West Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V7V 1S; by e-mail c/o Graham Baldwin at <gbaldwin@info-mine.com> or c/o Roger Dawson at Dawson, Wood & Co. at 604-366-1295 (telephone) or 604-266-1295 (facsimile).
Sides from England have expressed interest; we also look forward to seeing sides from across Canada and the USA. Allow time, if at all possible, to enjoy day trips to the beautiful Gulf Islands, the historic provincial capital of Victoria, and the magnificent mountain and seascape setting of Vancouver itself, in the heart of the Pacific Northwest coast of Canada!

A Letter to the Editors

Dear Editors,

In the introduction to Dick Bagwell's article "Morris at Altitude", published in the American Morris Newsletter, March-April 1996, Volume 19, Number 1, pp. 14-15, the question is posed as to whether it is a record to dance the morris at an altitude of 14,900 feet.

I am afraid the answer is no, as Keith Taylor of the Harthill Morris Men from Yorkshire has performed "Nutting Girl" at an altitude of 20,400 feet. Keith described his feat in a letter which was accompanied by a photograph and published in the Morris Ring Circular, Number Three, September 1983.

I would be most interested to hear if any morris dancer can beat that!

Wassail!

Gordon Ridgewell
Sometime Fool, London
Rodney Morris Men

Ediors' Note: Keith's letter describes his dancing a "very shortened" Nutting Girl on the South Ridge of Mount Cholatse, "surrounded on three sides by a 4000-foot drop." Better you than us, mate! So for those of you keeping score, the unofficial tally is now:

- Morris jig, partial: 20,400 ft. (Keith Taylor)
- Morris jig, complete—no musician: 20,000 ft. (Steve Barker)
- Morris jig, complete with musician: 14,900 ft. (Dick Bagwell and Anne Miller Bagwell)

Gordon Ridgewell
Sometime Fool, London
Rodney Morris Men

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Bay Area Country Dance Society's

Fall Dance Camp at Monte Toyon

Andra Herzbrun Horton of Marlboro Morris & Sword will teach the Longsword dance from Flamborough & Headington Morris.

Peter Sjoukkes of Horwich Prize Medal Morris Dancers will teach North West Clog Morris.

There will also be English Country & Ceilidh dancing, American Contras and Squares, a musicians’ workshop & singing.

October 17–19, 1997
in the Redwoods near Santa Cruz, California

For further information contact Vanessa Schnatmeier at (415) 365-2913, email <meier@sslOl.slac.stanford.edu>; snail mail 1122 Hudson Street, Redwood City, CA 94061