

## THAMES VALLEY LOGBOOK

2010 to 2019

This logbook is a mixture of retrospective reconstruction, for the years from 2010 to 2015, and a revived series of logs written as events occurred in the years from 2016 to 2019 by John Elkins and John Walsh.

But even though these were all comparatively recent years, and there were fewer gaps in the computer records, memories, when consulted over what happened ten years ago or even more recently, sometimes often conflicted. It seemed that the more members who were asked to remember a certain event the more different memories emerged.

Photographs from the archive again helped to confirm details, although the closer to the present, the more photographs there are to sift through. John Walsh has added many photographs through the years from 2015. We intend to add more in time.

As is clear to me, the content of all the logbooks ultimately depends on whose memories and preferences about what was worth recording were consulted. The content of the first two logbooks was decided by Cyril. I take full responsibility for what is included in the logbooks covering the years from 1987 onwards, although there are plenty of articles written by others. If you read any of the logbooks and think of something that has been left out and should be put in, or if anything is just plain wrong, please tell John Elkins who will be happy to include your favourite stories.

John Elkins

July 2020

### 2010 LOG

**Friday, February 5. The Squire's Soiree** at the Bengal Lancer, Claygate for 17 Morris Men, wives and/or loved ones.

**Saturday, May 1. May Day on Box Hill.** A few TVMM stragglers joined Ewell, Marlings, Rampant Roosters and Spring Grove at dawn.

**Tuesday, April 6. Letterbox stuffing, Claygate** Practice evening was devoted to distributing newly printed promotional leaflets through the letterboxes of Claygate, in preparation for an avalanche of applications to join Thames Valley at the Claygate "Get Involved Day".

**Saturday, April 17. Claygate "Get Involved Day".** We manned a table covered with photos, leaflets and memorabilia alongside other Claygate organisations outside Claygate Village Hall from 10.00 am onwards, with dancing at 12.30. This and the leafletting effort generated a grand total of 3 enquiries, one asking where the nearest women's side danced, the next enquiring about maypole dancing, and the third about the origins of Morris dancing. No recruits.

**Saturday, April 17. Byfleet.** We danced in the afternoon outside The Anchor and St Mary's Church at the invitation of The Anchor Folk Club.

**Tuesday, May 4 The Griffin, Claygate** A brave band of TVs danced to a huge crowd of 3 (4 if you count Cheryl). We had a full side +1 with the very welcome presence of Mike Vardy.

**Tuesday, May 11 The Castle, Ottershaw** Another good night, a full side and a large and appreciative crowd. A guest appearance of Jan Lucas plus the groupies (Jenny and Annie) cheering us on. A music session inside afterwards which was well received.

**Friday, May 14 Rowan Brae School, Claygate** A select group danced for and with 12 kindergarten girls at 9.30.

**Tuesday, May 18 The Foley Arms, Claygate** Nothing else having been arranged we danced in kit outside The Foley.

**Tuesday, May 25 The Parrot, Forest Green** An evening with Rampant Rooster was cancelled because the landlady at the Parrot had accepted a large funeral party and did not think it would be appropriate. So just a practice evening at the Foley.

**Thursday, June 3, Mickleham** The Running Horse with Ewell MM.

**Sunday, June 6. Woking Hospice Fete at the International School of London in Surrey, Old Woking Road.** We successfully appealed not to perform in the arena, and had a roving brief.

**Tuesday, June 8. The Queens Head, Byfleet.**

**Monday, June 14 Thames Court, Shepperton** at the invitation of Offspring Grove.

**Sunday, June 20 Hampton Court to Kingston Boat Trip and return** Only five 5 dancers plus Michael from London Pride danced on board and at The Bishop, Bentalls, and The Ram in Kingston plus The King's Arms, Lion Gate, Hampton Court.

**Tuesday, June 29 The Parrot, Forest Green** with Jack Straws.

**Sunday, July 4 The Griffin, Claygate** TVMM danced to celebrate Landlord Tom's 20 years at the Griffin, with guest appearances from Tim Cawdron and Dave Dearsley. Followed by **Phil Turner's retirement party at his house in Ashford.**

**Tuesday, July 6 Practice at The Foley** replaced an evening at The Swan, Claygate, where TV coverage of a Football World Cup took precedence (quite rightly).

**Tuesday, July 13 The Phoenix, Sunbury** A merry evening with a crowd keen to join in.

**Saturday, July 17 Claygate Flower Show** with invited guests Datchet, who provided 10 dancers and musicians, (including 1 veggie), 2 children and 1 other adult for lunch and dancing at The Griffin, along with 14 (!) from Thames Valley. Then to The Winning Horse, the Hare and Hounds and dancing in the Arena after tea and cakes provided by the organisers. Dance in the arena between 4.45 and 5.30. This is a change of plan by the organisers - we previously had two separate half hour sessions. We took a stall and gazebo near the cricket pavilion and filled it with advertising material. No new members registered.

**Tuesday, July 20 The Royal Marine, Lyne.** with Spring Grove

**Tuesday, July 27 The Bells, Staines.**

**Tuesday August 3 The Saddlers Arms, Send** with Fleur de Lys

**Tuesday August 10. The Swan, Claygate.**

**Monday, August 23** Sad news of the death of Phil Underwood's partner Robbie after a long fight with cancer and heart disease.

**Tuesday, August 24. The Castle, Ottershaw.**

**Weekend August 27-9 The Cotswolds weekend - Withington**

**Friday.** Luxury camping at the King's Head camping and caravan park. **Saturday The Farmer's Arms,** Guiting Power, **The Snowhill Arms, Snowhill** for lunch and dancing, **Snowhill Manor** for dancing and tea, and finally back to **The King's Head** for dancing, eating, drinking and the obligatory "music" session. **Sunday** Procession to **The Mill from the Kings Head** for dancing and "beer". Back to the KH for pickled eggs and dancing. Evening dancing at **The Victoria,** and back to **King's Head** to find a corner of the pub where there's no singing or music.

**Weekend September 3-5 Trigg Ring meeting** John Walsh wrote: "An excellent weekend with a thoroughly enjoyable song session in the brewery bar in St Austell on Friday night, an excellent tour in the sunshine on Saturday taking in Port Isaac, St Brewards and Blisland, an adequate feast (never my favourite bit!) and decent show dancing on Sunday morning - we did Jimmy Brooks. I think we did as well as might be hoped for and on Sunday morning the squire of the ring suggested Queens Delight (strewth) as a massed dance. TVMM was the only side that took him up on the offer, even if Phil had never done it before! Only one other mixed six managed it. We picked up a number of invitations over the weekend. Janet Ridley asked us if we would come and dance for their 50th wedding anniversary in July and Thaxted asked us to go to their 100th anniversary ring meeting in June."

*The following is an extract from a talk on the immortal memory written for the Ring Meeting by Paul Reece. "When I first met Trigg some 30 years ago they still had dancing their chief luminary and founder member Chris Penton, then aged 70, who would be a 100 today if he was still alive. Chris had first been a member of St Albans Morris Men and in 1953 a founder member and first Squire of Thames Valley Morris Men, the same year in fact that Chris Ridley joined them as a dancer, though both were musicians and helped out with playing for the side when their regular musician was unavailable. While Chris Ridley is regarded as a living legend and practically an immortal in Trigg, the folk movement in Cornwall and of Thames Valley MM as their president, it is on Trigg's chief mentor, the warmly remembered psychiatrist Chris Penton that I wish to dwell. Pete Marlow, I believe worked under him, but all who came under his spell were greatly influenced by him and remember him with particular deep affection.*

Chris Penton was a Lt Colonel in the Royal Army Medical Corps where he became Assistant Director of Army Psychiatry and in civilian life until his retirement Director of Army Personnel at the Royal Aircraft Establishment at Farnborough developing the techniques of personnel selection particularly those used in choosing candidates for officer training. I will

be making recommendations at the next AC that these are used for the selection of our next squire of the Morris Ring.

On retirement Chris wished to return to clinical work but stipulated on his speculative application for the post of Assistant Psychiatrist at St Lawrence 's Hospital, Bodmin that he was only interested in the job if there was a local Morris side. Whether this was for recreation, psychiatric research or therapy we are not entirely sure, but as luck and the cods of Insanity would have it there were people in the hospital and outside who wanted to start a Morris side. The hospital was used for practices and one of Trigg's dances, 'Old Carew', was named after the Carew Ward and another 'Wenford Bridge', after the bridge close to where Chris Penton lived.

Equally mad was the fact that Bodmin had had a flourishing footwear industry from medieval times until the 20th century supplying the surrounding quarries and mines, and St. Lawrence's Hospital workshop carried old stacks of scoots and toe plates to the delight of local scoot or step dancers up until the late 1980s. So what was affectionately 'the madhouse' was secretly a kind of Cornish Cecil Sharp House, an underground Trefusis or Trelawney that attracted dancers and sparked Trigg's beginnings as a kind of early do it yourself care in the community dance outfit, on Barry Bucknell lines, not those of Barry Care. Interestingly in the early Morris or Mattachin dances denoting combat with swords of Christian against the Moors as illustrated at Altarnun, the word Matta also denotes mad or fools dance. It is highly likely that migration of these dances came through Europe along pilgrimage routes via Looe. Roger Comley's shell and bedpan are not therefore as mad as they seem.

Testament to how well Trigg was put together and run is that Trigg's founding Bagman, Roger Hancock is still doing the job, surely a record in the Ring for both service to a Morris side and sheer madness. The membership may be as mad as ever, but the work they do in their distinctive individual celtic ropework baldrick designs taken from the celtic stone crosses of the region promoting the Morris in Cornwall and beyond is truly inspiring. Almost as well travelled as the Cornish saints, miners and engineers they have danced and sung in Brittany, Sweden and California as well as the length and breadth of that other country beyond the Tamar.

Chris Penton helped start something special here and nurtured with real passion and commitment away from outside interference, a club that is truly one for all and all for one. All of you here I'm sure can remember a Chris Penton figure in your own side who make such a difference. They have a vision which many on the outside would call mad, but with backing and sustained effort create such a meaningful flowering in the wilderness, thus contributing to Sharp's dream of returning the dance culture of the people to the people."

**Sunday September 12 The Cricketers, Horsell** supporting a charity bike ride in aid of Woking Hospice.

**Saturday, September 18 Yateley Day of Dance** TVMM were short of numbers but survived with a little help from their friends. The tour included stops at Basingstoke, Old Basing, Milestones Museum, the Frog and Wicket at Eversley, and the Dog and Partridge at Yateley.

**Weekend October 1-4 Forest of Dean weekend** the usual weekend efficiently organised by Eddie in and around his house in Cinderford, with indoor and outdoor camping, beds in

Eddies caravan, a nearby campsite and B&B. **Saturday** The Hostelrie, Goodrich, dancing and lunch. The Malt Shovel, Ruardean, the Royal Spring, Lydbrook and back to Psces Cottage for food and drink. **Sunday** The Courtfield Arms, and The Dog and Muffler, Joyford for final dancing and lunch.

**Tuesday, October 19. The Castle, Ottershaw**

**October 2010 To all members of Thames Valley Morris Men,**

Dear Riparians,

Your President is delighted to have the opportunity of a few words to my subjects at your 2010 AGM. My heart did indeed beat a little faster at Trigg's Ring Meeting, seeing you all in such good turnout and dancing so well. I only glimpsed a couple of your dances because your tour did not coincide with mine but what I did see was grand. I hadn't planned to sing "De Do Ron Ron" but the TV cheerleaders left me no opportunity to back out.! I have already congratulated you on your very extensive 2010 fixture-list; I hope they all came through OK, and that 2011 will be as good if not better. I hope you will make every effort to attend a Ring Meeting again. Trigg has not discussed our choice yet. I understand you may be electing new officers at the AGM; may I hope my subjects will work hard with them to give them lots of support in the years to come, as this could be a critical time for TVMM. I enclose the Invitation you are expecting, and I hope you (Dick) can email it to all members, though we naturally will not expect any from the home area because of the distance involved. We may only get members from Devon and Somerset, ie Peter Jones, Mike Vardy, Digger Glaister (and Brian Heaton?). Of particular interest would be those who danced at our wedding at Kingston-on-Thames, July 196L, of whom only two are still with us namely Jim Barclay and Ron Duncombe, but they live too far away for us to expect them to travel here (though perhaps you'd include them in your email please). Then there are all the ladies of course, please advise Jenny Glaister, Jill Jones, Hilda Gibson and any others. We'd love to hear from them even if it is "Sorry, can't get there". You won't need to have a complete side; you could do a couple of jigs or double-jigs; just your presence would be so wonderful. We have in mind a couple of items each from Thames Valley, Trigg, and Saffron Maids. We have booked a small band, The Ideal Village Band, and will be inviting many of the regular dancers from the clubs in Cornwall. Have a fruitful AGM, a great Christmas, a fulfilling 2011 including perhaps St Hygenus on January 7th, and possibly see a few of you next July. Regards (or "Yours in Step" as Jim Brookes would say) and thank you to Dick Keen for his patience with this irritatingly non-email member:

Your President.

### **Thames Valley Morris Men**

#### **Notes of the AGM held on October 26, 2010 at the Foley Arms, Claygate**

**Present:** J Elkins (Squire), D Keen (Bagman), J Denny (Publicity), P Turner (Ragman), S Tovey (Webmaster), A.Bull, J.Barclay, J Hare, J.Petts, M.Jenkins, M.Sugrue, J.Walsh.

**Roll of honour:** The Squire read out the names of deceased TVMM members: Jim Brooks, Tony Brown, Peter Dashwood, Amnon Derrenberg, Hugh Gibson, John Glaister, Siward Glaister, John Hall, Martin Jolly, Alun Jones, Norman Keam, George Lawrence, Dick Mussen, Derek Paynter, Christopher Penton, Ted Perry, Gordon Ralph, Cyril Smith, Gordon Smith, Mervyn Stanley, Phil Sylvester, Bill Tofts.

**Website:** Little to report, some changes to the front page and plenty of room for expansion. Annual cost about £70.

**Publicity:** Two notable events had been the Claygate Village Get Involved Day and the Flower Show, where displays had been shown and interest noticed – but the only hard result was an invitation (accepted) to dance at the Rowan junior school.

**Music:** There are about 6 “regular” musicians with varying levels of skill. A few early practice starts had been arranged to allow for separate practice for the musicians.

**Ragman:** A new stock of hats was now available, men will be asked to contribute £10 to the cost. Otherwise there was enough kit in stock to satisfy likely requirements.

**Animals:** The goat and horse were impatient for more outings, but this depended on having enough dancers.

**Sticks:** Plenty in stock for the next season.

**Accounts:** We spent about £650 more than we received in 2009/2010, but still ended the year with more than £2,300 in the bank. It was agreed that subs should be £20/year and that more people should be encouraged to pay. Also agreed that we should reduce the subsidies to the side for attendance at various events and concentrate more on collecting. Expenditure on publicity should continue. Donations to charities should be in some way linked to our income, although of course we would continue to support charities by dancing.

**Bagman:** There had been a full programme of dancing away weekends at The Forest of Dean, The Cotswolds, The Trigg Ring Meeting, all of them very successful. Nevertheless, getting sides for weekend events had still proved difficult. We had shared dancing spots with Ewell, Spring Grove, Datchet, Fleur de Lys, Jack Straws and others.

**Squire:** The standard of dancing had been remarkably good despite (or perhaps because of) the limited pool of dancers, swelled noticeably by country members whenever TVMM ventured West of Oxford. Four man dancing was now a regular feature both of practice and dancing out and sometimes resulted in some surprising improvements in the dances.

**Election of Officers:** Dick Keen had decided to stand down as Bagman. In the resulting reshuffle the following were elected or re-elected unanimously:

Squire: John Walsh

Bagman: John Elkins

Treasurer: Fran Smith

Ragman: Phil Turner

Webmaster: Steve Tovey

Publicity: James Denny

Animals and sticks: Dick Keen

**Other Business:**

\*Steve and James will put their heads together on developing the website, including, maybe, using Facebook.

\*Still no firm news about the redevelopment of The Foley, but a suggestion from the manageress that “something might happen in March”.

**Thursday November 4 Ale Tasting, The Talbot, Ripley** We had a very enjoyable evening in Ripley - Fleur de Lys were also dancing. There was much audience appreciation, the Colonel seemed very pleased and we have been invited (commanded?) back for next year.

**Saturday, November 13 Anchor Folk Club, Byfleet**

**Thames Valley Morris Men  
Fixtures Meeting held on November 16, 2010 at the Foley Arms, Claygate**

The main decisions taken were:

\*Tuesday night practices will continue until early May, from when we will dance out on Tuesdays through to early September, and then back to practices.

\*We will continue to limit away weekends, although there is the usual log-jam in July. It was decided to give priority to Krov (who subsequently declined to invite us), Datchet's Day of Dance, John Hare's birthday and the Claygate Flower Show. We hope also to be represented at the Ridley's significant wedding anniversary and

\*We will maintain our presence in Claygate and try to dance round all 5 pubs in the year.

\*We will aim to dance with other friendly sides including (in no particular order) Spring Grove, London Pride, Pilgrim, Ewell, Datchet, Fleur de Lys, Jack Straws.

John Elkins

TVMM Bagman

**Friday, November 26 Hampton Hill Carnival parade** in support of Shooting Star

**Saturday December 4 Claygate Christmas Lights**

**Wednesday December 8 - Thames Ditton Street Fair**

**Sunday December 26 - Boxing Day** The familiar routine, The Swan, The Foley, The Hare and Hounds, The Winning horse, The Griffin.



## 2011 LOG

**February 19 Robin Cobb's funeral at Telford.** Ten members of Thames Valley said farewell to Robin with the musicians accompanying the singing of Blowing in the Wind and the dancers dancing The Cuckoo's Nest, a favourite of Robin's. More dancing outside the crematorium and at Robin's favourite pub, The Down Inn. Rona wrote to say that our dancing and music making "made the occasion very special and warming and was greatly appreciated by some of our friends who knew nothing about it"

**February 19 Kennet Ale, Bracknell**

**April 24 The Bridge Barn, Woking,** on the south side of the Basingstoke Canal where we danced for the **Surrey/Hants Canal Society.**

**May 2 Little Venice** A gallant few - Mick Jenkins, Mike Sugrue, James and John Walsh - joined London Pride in Paddington, had a very enjoyable time and earned £100 for TV .

**May 3 Claygate, The Griffin**

**May 11 Maida Vale** Another to town to dance with London Pride, this time at the Prince Alfred, Formosa Street and the Warwick Castle, Warwick Place.

**May 17 Richmond** The Prince's Head (on the Green) and The White Cross (by the river)..

**May 24 The Castle, Ottershaw.**

**May 31 The Saddlers Arms, Send** with Fleur de Lys and Jack Straws.

**June 4 Wintershall Estate, Bramley** We were engaged to warm up the crowd arriving, between the car park and the arena, for a charity concert possibly featuring old rockers Eric Clapton, Lulu, Geoff Beck, Georgie Fame, Kiki Dee. We rendezvoused at The Jolly Farmer, Bramley, where we met another old rocker, Jack Garwood, who appeared in what can only be described as Turkish trousers, and whose memory of how to perform our dances was even worse than ours. We must have had our biggest audience for years as black-tied and/or party-frocked revellers of a certain age trudged past us into the rock arena. Sadly, Lulu and Georgie Fame couldn't come to see us dance, but they were there in spirit.

**June 14 Claygate, The Foley** A practice night in kit which yielded a bag of £27.

**June 20 Weston Green** We danced for and with the 1st Weston Green Beavers at All Saints' Church Hall. We must have been good because the Beavers made a donation to Woking Hospice in gratitude.

**June 22 Richmond** Spring Grove's mid-summer bash at the White Cross and The Barmy Arms attended by Spring Grove, Datchet, East Surrey, Ewell St Mary's, Greensleeves, Thames Valley and Yateley.

**June 25 Datchet and Windsor** Datchet Border Morris 50th Anniversary Dance Weekend. A brilliant day with Greensleeves, Hoddesdon Crownsmen, Off-Spring, Taeppa's Tump and



Datchet. After dancing at Datchet all sides caught the 11.17 train to Windsor for walking tours and lunch. Back to Datchet by train for very good tea, more dancing and a feast.

**June 29 Guildford** An evening with Pilgrim at The Keystone.

**July 5 Whiteley Village, Hersham** A merry evening dancing at the retirement village for an elderly audience who would have joined in enthusiastically if they had the legs! Afterwards at The Plough, Byfleet.

**July 9 West Byfleet.** An afternoon with John Hare and his family celebrating a big birthday with plenty of food, cake and dancing in John's garden. We were one dancer short of a side, but you've never seen such accomplished 4-man Morris.

**July 12 Sunbury, The Phoenix,**

**July 16 Claygate Flower Show** With our guests from Datchet we danced at The Winning Horse, The Griffin (lunch), The Hare and Hounds, and The Flower Show. In line with recent trends our appearance at the Show was delayed even further, until 4.50, in front of a diminishing audience mostly comprising expectant winners of the most knobbly potatoes and carrots in show.

**July 19 The Bells, Staines**

**July 22/24 Devon Vardy/Ridley Weekend** The side (plus Margaret Brown) assembled in and around West Barton Gate (Mile and Jill's) from Friday evening. Saturday started at Lynton, where we danced and caught the cliff railway down to Lynmouth for more dancing. Then up the cliff railway and off to lunch at the Hunters Inn, Heddon Valley for dancing, lunch and a stroll to Heddon's Mouth. There must have been tea somewhere and there was definitely dancing and eating at the Black Venus Inn, Challacombe, in the evening.

There was a walk on Sunday morning followed by (for a slightly reduced party), by the trip to Bodmin Moor for the golden wedding celebration for Chris and Janet Ridley at Withiel Village Hall. Trigg, as expected and as usual, put Thames Valley in the shade with their high standard dancing, singing and general enjoyment of life, but Thames Valley put on a good show for their president.

**August 2nd - The Saddlers Arms, Send with Fleur de Lys.**

**August 9 Dorking, The Pilgrim with Wip the Ploughboy!**

**August 14th - Painshill Park** We were paid more money than we could ever remember ever getting for one fixture to appear from 2.00 to 5.00, including at least two dance sessions and being available to talk to the punters about Morris things in general. We were helped out by extras from Ewell, London Pride and Spring-Off-Grove. Michael Runge of London Pride noted that he would be able to say to his grandchildren, should he ever have any, that he danced in the Gothic temple at Painshill! – as did we all.

**August 16 - Croydon dance evening**

**August 23 The Castle, Ottershaw** with Spring Grove Off.

### **August 26 Cotswolds weekend, Withington**

**Saturday.** The Hollow Bottom, Guiting Power, then lunch at The Farmers Arms, Guiting Power. After lunch The Brockhampton Produce Show and Fete, with tea/cakes/beer and book stall. Back to The Kings Head, for dancing and a nourishing cauldron of Chili con carne from Jill, an opportunity to quaff all the reject bottles of wine that will be kindly donated.

**Sunday Procession to The Mill** with dancing there and at The King's Head. Early evening at The Seven Tuns, Chedworth.

**September 9/11 Forest of Dean** Friday evening was eating and drinking at Pisces Cottage with Maureen and Edwrad. On Saturday, after the traditional belly buster breakfast, we visited The Kymin, "A wooded landmark hill with pleasure grounds, a Georgian banqueting house, Naval Temple and stunning views over the surrounding countryside." Then to the Boat Inn, Pennalt, lunch stop. This was a pub without chips but with a vast array of casks of cider. When we woke up again we dragged ourselves to The Ostrich Inn, Newland. Unfortunately the Ostrich also sold cider so All Saints Church "The Cathedral of The Forest" received scant attention. Then to the Royal Spring Inn, Lower Lydbrook, and back to Pisces Cottage for last night's leftovers and booze. Sunday. Another belly buster then The Woodman Inn, Parkend, which is near a station on the Dean Forest Railway – not that anyone was interested. Finally The White Hart, Broadoak, Newnham on Severn, the last styop for dancing and lunch. Another magnificent weekend cgez Morris.

### **September 17 Yateley Day of Dance**

**November 8 Ale Tasting at The Talbot, Ripley.**

### **November 15, TVMM AGM at the Foley Arms, Claygate**

Present: J.Walsh (Squire), J Elkins (Bagman), F.Smith (Treasurer), P.Turner (Ragman), A.Bull, J.Barclay, J.Hare, M.Jenkins, D.Keen , J.Petts, M.Sugrue, C.Stokes.

Roll of honour: The Squire read out the names of deceased TVMM members: Jim Brooks, Tony Brown, Robin Cobb, Peter Dashwood, Amnon Derrenberg, Hugh Gibson, John Glaister, Siward Glaister, John Hall, Martin Jolly, Alun Jones, Norman Keam, George Lawrence, Dick Mussen, Derek Paynter, Christopher Penton, Ted Perry, Gordon Ralph, Cyril Smith, Gordon Smith, Mervyn Stanley, Phil Sylvester, Bill Tofts.

Website: Apologies and a report that all was well with website were received from the webmaster, S.Tovey by telephone.

Publicity: James Denny had stood down because of other commitments. Fixtures leaflets and beer-mats had been distributed in 2011 and efforts would continue in 2012, with an emphasis of getting our website noted on local lists.

Ragman: There was enough kit in stock to supply two or three new members and to cope with likely demands from existing members.

Animals/Sticks: Dick Keen reported that the goat and the horse were in fine fettle and that he had received a good supply of sticks from Collie and Edward – plenty for the year ahead.

Accounts: Cash in the bank at the end of the year (£3834.81) £1500 up on a year ago, mainly because of a surge in fees – notably from Painshill, Wintershall and Claygate Flower Show. Most events at least broke even, although a few made small losses because of support from club funds, leaving funds in a very healthy condition. It was agreed that subs for 2012 should be held at £20/year for active and country members, but should remain voluntary. Also agreed to continue membership of the Morris Ring and EFDSS. The side will donate £200 to Woking Hospice and collect hard for the Hospice at an event to be arranged by Dick Keen.

Bagman: There had been 34 dancing events since the last AGM, of which 13 had involved turning out for some or all of the weekend. These had included Boxing Day, the Clapton concert at Wintershall, the Datchet Day of Dance, Claygate Flower Show, Painshill Park, the Cotswolds, the Forest of Dean weekend, the Twitchen/Ridley weekend and Yateley Day of Dance. We had enjoyed dancing with Ewell, Datchet, Fleur de Lys, London Pride, Pilgrim, Spring Grove, WIP the Ploughboy and others during the year. There was still no news about the redevelopment of The Foley, and it looked as if the side would be safe there at least until the summer dancing season started in 2012.

Squire: The standard of dancing from our limited core of dancers, enhanced from time to time by country members had continued at a good standard and had generated some plaudits during the year. Golden oldie dances would continue to be revived to join the current repertoire of mixed traditions, with an emphasis on distinguishing the differences in dancing between traditions. The Squire welcomed two new members, Sam and Chris, and hoped for more. He also thanked the musicians for their regular and enthusiastic support.

Election of Officers: The following officers were re-elected by acclamation:

Squire: John Walsh    Bagman: John Elkins    Treasurer: Fran Smith

Ragman: Phil Turner    Webmaster: Steve Tovey    Animals and sticks: Dick Keen

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### **November 15 Fixtures Meeting** at the Foley Arms, Claygate

It was agreed that Tuesday night practices will continue until early May, from when we will dance out on Tuesdays through to early September, and then back to practices. The following events will be central to next year's fixtures: Forest of Dean weekend: Jubilee weekend – various events possible; Painshill Park: Krov (Formal invitation still awaited, but quotes received from coach companies): Claygate Flower Show and 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event in the evening. Cotswold weekend.

**Early November Hugh the Drover** John W and John E were approached at Richmond on May 17 by the director of Hampstead Garden Opera to take part in a performance of Hugh the Drover at Upstairs at The Gatehouse in November. The opera, by Vaughan Williams, included a scripted scene for Morris dancers. We said yes, attended rehearsals and appeared in one of the final performances. London pride and Greensleeves took the other two nights. The following Greensleeves note explains all.

## **NIGHTS AT THE OPERA**

If one is in the Morris for long enough, it's possible to accumulate the 15 minutes of fame which Andy Warhol promised each of us. For instance, in 30 years Greensleeves men have 'starred' in a TV commercial, two game shows, a Noel Edmonds programme (yuk), 'Argumental' on Dave, one on CBBC (much more adult), and spots on Radio Five Live and Radio London. Then there have been live performances at Cecil Sharp House and the National Theatre (OK, actually *outside* the National Theatre). Recently, with Thames Valley and London Pride, the club's media exposure has taken in live opera.

Vaughan Williams' 'Hugh the Drover' is set in the Cotswolds in 1810. Given the composer's involvement in collecting, it not surprisingly uses a number of traditional musical themes. The original stage directions have Morris men simply entering, led by a pipe and tabor player, and walking round before exiting. This wasn't for director Angela Hardcastle: if she was going to use Morris dancers, she was jolly well going to have them dance. Angela 'auditioned' various local sides by attending Spring Grove's midsummer bash in Richmond and Twickenham. Greensleeves and Thames Valley were intrigued enough to volunteer (even though the performances were in north London), and later London Pride were enrolled.

Our spot was about 14 minutes into the first act. The dramatic intention was that the crowd from the previous scene were enticed away to watch the dancers, leaving the heroine alone with her aunt, lamenting that next day she is to be married against her will. In Angela's production, the chorus's call 'Here come the morris men!' heralded the entrance of a fool - a member of the company, wearing items of kit from at least two sides. He was followed by a hobby horse and two other dancers. Although short, the dance sequence needed to be worked out carefully, plus not a little rehearsal at practice sessions, especially as at various times 11 different dancers were involved. The hobby horse entered to a Winsterish tune by the orchestra, closely followed by the two dancers who simply double-stepped round the stage (for 12 bars??). The chorus beginning a different tune (and with a different time signature) was the cue for the two dancers to face the audience and perform a couple of short figures from Fieldtown jigs. Getting off had to be brisk, as virtually the whole company had to exit behind the dancers and hobby horse.

Although ridden by each of the sides, the hobby horse was supplied by Thames Valley. It was a splendid beast, currently known as Shergar for the name's story-telling potential. It was only a shame that, in such a short sequence, Shergar's many apps could not be used: these included mouth opening, ears rotating, and eyes lighting up. Indeed, learning how to actually get into Shergar's harness took a Greensleeves man two visits to a Thames Valley practice (where he was made very welcome). Shergar did have a small personal tragedy during one performance, when both his ears dropped off on stage. Fortunately this Van Gogh moment only happened once, and the ears were retrieved during the interval.

The Morris sequence in 'Hugh the Drover' was over in about 90 seconds, so - was it worth all the practice and travel? All the participants agreed that it was a thoroughly enjoyable and memorable experience. There's surely a bit of the luvvy in most Morris dancers: isn't that why Mummers' plays are so popular with today's sides? Being involved with sympathetic professionals like Angela and her superb cast and orchestra was both delightful and edifying. The company, Hampstead Garden Opera, was augmented by specialist soloists, and are one of a number of small groups producing operas simply for the

love of it. It certainly isn't for the money: with 95 to 100 per cent houses for each performance at the Gatehouse theatre, the financial result was 'only a small loss'.

The present writer regarded himself as operaphobic thanks to once having to sit through three hours of Italian opera sung in Czech. But he was entranced by the production of 'Hugh the Drover', especially given the intimacy of the 100-seat theatre (which is above a Wetherspoon's pub in Highgate, so a decent beer could be enjoyed by the audience).

If the English National Opera ever need Morris dancers, London sides are at their disposal.

**November 25 Hampton Hill Procession** in aid of The Shooting Star Hospice. By agreement we skipped the procession but danced in Hampton Hill High Street outside the Star until the procession turned up.

**November 26 Claygate Christmas Lights**

**December 7 Thames Ditton Christmas Fair**

**December 26 Boxing Day** The usual five pubs and a bag of £450.

## 2012 LOG

**January 11. Email from the Bagman.** “We discovered yesterday that The Foley is shutting on January 27 for refurbishment and is expected to re-open some time in the Autumn. We have two more practices there - Jan 17 and 24 - and I'll seek out alternative venues in Claygate for Jan 31 until into May, when we'll start dancing out on Tuesdays.”

**January 21 ditto.** “As you should all know by now, next Tuesday (Jan 24) will mark our last (ever?) practice at The Foley Arms. We're very grateful to Youngs for giving us so much notice to quit - at least three weeks - but I've put together a stunning tour of the village halls of North-East Surrey, so that TVMM can continue practising its new and exciting 2012 repertoire. On January 31 and February 7 we are booked in at the hall beside All Saints' Church, Weston Green. On Feb 14 we'll be at the Vera Fletcher Hall, Embercourt Road, Thames Ditton. Finally, on Feb 21 we visit the Claygate Village Hall, probably an easy javelin throw from The Hare and Hounds (with nothing in between). The bookings are all from 8.00 until 10.00 p.m so we'll concentrate on dancing most of that time. Notices can be taken quickly or afterwards in the pubs which are close to all the venues. But there's no reason why we can't bring our own beer and glasses into the halls so long as we're clean and tidy. After that we'll be hopping around between the three venues until the end of April.”

**February 15 Horniman's Museum** Dick joined London Pride to show the Morris to half term visitors.

**February 23 Otlands Scout Group** We spent about an hour or so with the Scouts, did a couple of dances, explained who we are, and then got the scouts involved in dance.

**May 5 to 7 Forest of Dean weekend** Edward arranged a coach for the Saturday tour which took us to The Kilcot Inn, Newent, The Yew Tree, Cliffords Mesne (lunch stop), The Red Lion, Huntley and The Royal Spring, Lower Lydbrook before returning us to Pisces Cottage for food, booze and sleep. On Sunday morning after Belly buster breakfast we went by car to our favourite cider house -

The Boat at Penault and then to The Rising Sun, Moseley Green, Parkend. For last dances and lunch. Another excellent weekend and an opportunity to meet Margaret Brown again. On the Saturday (from the Yew Tree?) we climbed up onto May Hill and danced up there to a small walking party. Was this Chris Stokes' first public dance at the Kilcot Inn?

**May 12 Broadwood Day of Dance, Horsham**

**May 15 Claygate, The Griffin**

**May 22 The Castle, Ottershaw**

**May 29 Marnies Inn, Weston Green**

**June 5 The Weir, Molesey**

**June 12 The Phoenix, Sunbury** More Naked Ladies.

**June 16 St John's Church fete - West Byfleet** We had a very enjoyable session dancing in front of the church on flagstones after listening to the Cobham Brass Band in sunshine with summer fete stalls all around. The Bagman bought eight books. You could say it's what Morris dancing is all about,

### **June 19 The Parrot, Forest Green**

**June 24 Painshill Park** We danced down near the cafe and then up the hill by the vintage car gathering. Not many people about. Excellent photos taken by a professional photographer (Carol Hartfree) who happened to be there.

**28th to 2nd July Wine festival – Krov, Germany** For the first time for a Krov trip we used Motts Coaches of Aylesbury. They told us the continental driver would meet us at Dover to save his driving hours for the long overnight section. We were surprised to see him (Trevor) arrive there driving his own car! Jill remembers that Annie Stanley was not well on the way out – Mike was not well on the way back.

We provided our usual large party -32: Edward and Maureen, John Petts +1, Mike Vardy and Jill Jones, Sam and Emma, Mike and Annie Sugrue, Phil the Doc and Leslie, Phil Underwood + Carol, John and Linda Walsh, Jenny G, Annie S, Kate, Dave and Dawn Sheppard, Angela Horlock, Alan B, Dave D, John E, Allan G, Barry, Peter J, Dick, Jan, Malcom, Fran.

We left Calais after midnight and arrived in Krov in time to spread out to our allocated digs, some paid for, some allocated free by the tourist office to those who had opted to sleep on the school room floor. Among these were John E and Alan B who shared a room in the Wein and Gastehaus Jorg Beth whose English wife of the German proprietor revealed that the hoteliers and B&B owners were becoming increasingly disgruntled over the years to be put under pressure to provide free accommodation by the organisers of the annual festival.

The schedule for this, possibly our last visit to Krov, was familiar. All groups met at the Europabrunnen to process to the festival area. There, as usual, we sacrificed two of our party to help “build a circle” on stage around the wine queens for the coronation of Mosella Kathrin, the new wine princess. Fascinating though this was expected to be, most of us instead made straight for our HQ, the Schnitzius Wine Bar.

We danced formally by the riverside and on the floating stage over the weekend as well as taking part in the grand parade on Sunday afternoon, with frequent informal dance (and refreshment) stops in between. As usual, it has proved hard to recreate our actual Saturday and Sunday timetable, but the photographs helped.

Our three jolly tars - Dave, Edward and Barry - eschewed the popular bars that we used and went off at frequent intervals to their own sailor-friendly place to tell tales of the sea.

After the Sunday raft performance (or possibly before it?), we stayed for a drink or two in the festival area and some - notably a very happy Champ - joined in with the general informal dancing. He found a willing (perhaps) partner in a lady dressed as an US flag.







Dawn led us in the procession carrying the St George cross. Fran was wheeled around the course by Mike Sugrue's son William. Once again there was a beer half way round courtesy of Linda and Kate Walsh (on a short visit with husband Engin).



It rained a bit and we took refuge and danced in a narrow entrance passage beside one of the bars.



Fran wasn't the only one to take advantage of the wheelchair.



We managed a little social dancing at the Schnitzius bar late on Sunday, but for some it was all just too much.

The other groups at the festival were from Langenstein – Deutschland, Seefeld – Schweiz, Spierdijker Dansers – Holland, Runj – Weißrußland, Hajduk Stanko – Serbien, Awayu – Bolivia and Ballet Folklorico de la Paz – Bolivien. We were particularly impressed by the Bolivian (ladies).

More from Jill. On the way back, we were all (apart from Maureen and someone with a broken leg – Emma? or is this just my imagination - but including sticks, instruments and animals) made to get out of the coach and be individually interviewed by immigration officials. Eddie and Maureen's friend (I think a New Zealander), who had spent the weekend sketching Krov and the festivities, but not watching much of TVMM, was grilled by a very suspicious immigration officer. His suspicions were heightened by her answers: Q Tell me what you know about morris dancing, A Nothing; Q Tell me the names of the morris dancers, A mmm...well, that is Eddie; Q. Where is Krov, A I think it is somewhere in Germany; Q Where do the morris dancers come from? A I think it is somewhere near

London. And so on. They let her go in the end, but we were close to missing the ferry or abandoning a Forest of Dean based Kiwi on the wrong side of the Channel.

Jan Lucas recalls a one legged cyclist who [turned up at the bar one evening](#). “I can’t remember his name, but think it is Horst. He is a relative (son?) of one of the early “hosts” and I think Jenny and Siward stayed with his family when he was a school boy. Whilst at university he had cancer and his leg was amputated as part of the treatment. I remember he and another school friend stayed with Siward and Jenny on a trip to England, then he and his new wife stayed at “the cottage” for their honeymoon. As a “thank you” they sent a box containing six bottles of Krov wine – I remember the postman delivering them – a soggy mass of alcohol soaked cardboard and broken glass. Since 1999 he and his family have pitched up at Jenny’s a few times with their rather luxurious motor home and spent their holidays exploring London. Jenny has also played host to their oldest daughter (plus her boyfriend on more recent trips) for a few weeks in the summer over a number of years, because the daughter played in the London Youth Orchestra – something to do with falling out with her pen friend, with whom she had stayed previously.”

Dave Dearsley wrote. First some thanks to the two Johns who managed TVMM superbly through the Krov event. This required tremendous organisational skill as well as a more subtle skill of occupying us sufficiently to ensure that our group was often sober enough to dance without falling over. I did find the final dancing session a bit interesting in a stick dance when my target on the opposite side of the set kept moving up and down (through wave movement below the floating stage) and side to side through over-enthusiasm at the lunchtime witches bar indulgence, but that was just a minor inconvenience.

Malcolm Snowden wrote: Hi John Hi John, It was remiss of me on Monday not to offer my thanks for a great weekend. The dance selections were spot on and I think we did them justice. The displays were grand and I can’t believe it I even waved the *Cross of St. George*. And John, you never lets us down with your organisational skills.

John E wrote to the festival organisers: Dear Pia, and all the other organisers. We were so busy dancing all day, and every evening, and maybe drinking a little wine and beer, that I completely forgot to come and say thankyou for another wonderful weekend. And especially thankyou for all the room booking arrangements. Apart from one slightly twisted ankle everything was perfect. The accommodation, the food, the dancing arrangements were all excellent.

Apart from our official dancing on the floating stage and in the procession, we danced at the Seniorenhaus on the Friday afternoon, and after that we danced every day several times in Robert Schumanstrasse and at our temporary headquarters at the Schnitzius wine bar in Moselstrasse. By Sunday evening we were exhausted.

We met several old friends, including some of the Trossen family and Gert Klein, and were only disappointed that you now have a bridge to the festival stage instead of the exciting boat trip from previous years. Our first visit to Krov was in 1972, and one of our squad says that he has been eight times. I think I have only managed five visits! And, of course, we already want to come back.

Good luck with future festivals, and we hope to meet you again very soon. Best wishes from Thames Valley Morris Men, and we apologise for the behaviour of our goat, John Elkins.

**July 10 The Swan, Claygate with Phoenix Clog**

**July 14, Claygate Flower Show and TVMM 60<sup>th</sup> Party** An excellent day at The Claygate Flower Show. We found some tarmac to dance on by the pavilion for the 3.00 session in steady drizzle, and enough un-muddy grass in the arena for the 5.00 session, when it didn't rain at all. Ewell and Spring Grove joined us at around 5.00 and stayed for the informal evening session at The Hare and Hounds and in the Old School, where about 70 of us tucked into the buffet and enjoyed plenty of music, singing, dancing and reminiscing. Alan Dean was there, but didn't dance. Annie Stanley and Maggie and John were there. Chris Ridley, Jim Beard, and Nick Oliver were also probably there.

**July 24 - Prince of Wales, West End, Esher.**

**July 31 – The White Cross, Richmond**

**August 7 – The Saddlers Arms, Send, GU23 6JQ**

**August 14 - The Castle, Ottershaw, with Spring Grove**

**August 24 to 27 The Cotswolds weekend** The Bagman wrote – in advance:

**Friday** We have the use of the King's Head field for camping, and for you to offer me cake, curry, drinkable alcoholic beverages etc etc all weekend.

**Friday evening** "Friday Night is Morris Night" at the **King's Head (GL54 4BD)** - Beer tasting and camping under the stars.

**Saturday The Crown, Frampton Mansell; The Daneway Inn, Sapperton,** dancing and lunch: **Chedworth Annual Show and Fete** at the Village Hall The Football Field/Car park was waterlogged but there was a good flat surface by the Hall. After a fine performance by a local Silver Band we danced well and had a very good W.I. tea. **And so to Withington,** probably for a kip. **Dance at The King's Head and The Bathurst Arms, North Cerney** followed by "Saturday Night is Morris Night".at The Kings Head.

**Sunday Procession to "The Pukka Pie and Keg" (aka The Mill)** with dancing there and at **The King's Head,** followed by **Rest and Relaxation at** (and another little bit of dancing). Then off to **The Craven Arms, Brockhampton,** for dancing and tea. More rest and recuperation at The Kings Head until the final stop of the weekend at **The Green Dragon, Cowley.** Then **Sunday Night is Morris Night at the King's Head.**

**Monday morning** Go home if you haven't already gone.

After the weekend the Bagman wrote: "If you weren't at the Cotswolds, it was the best ever, and you shouldn't have missed it. If you were there, you'll know. We actually had 17 dancers and musicians on Saturday." Unfortunately, at the time of writing this entry in the log he has almost no recollection of any of it.

**September 4, York Gardens, Walton, Street Party** One of Chris Stokes' neighbours asked us to dance at this friendly and enjoyable session.

**September 11, Whiteley Village**

**September 18, Winter Practice at All Saints' Church Hall, Weston Green.** The start of a new era with no regular base in Claygate, but only a stone's throw away from The Alma (now known as Marney's Village Inn).

**October 30 - Jan Lucas evening at All Saints** – A practice session for all Thames Valley musicians.

**November 4 The Kings Head 100<sup>th</sup> birthday** Dave Craig wrote to tell us that he and a few others had turned up for “a wee party” at the Kings Head to celebrate the event. TVMM had sent flowers, which were “proudly on show”. The anniversary was marked on Sky news, Points South West, The Sun, The Western Daily Press, The Gloucestershire Echo, The Tippler (See below) and The Gloucestershire Standard.



Autumn 2012

Free - Please Take One



# the tippler



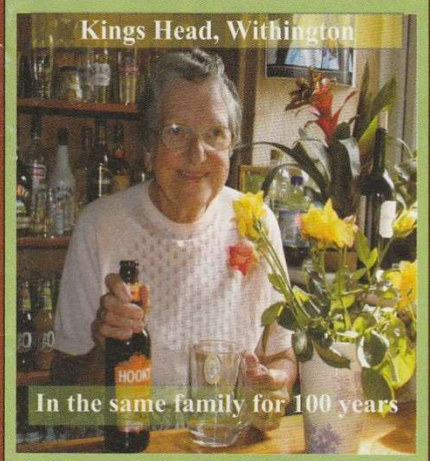
Newsletter of the Gloucestershire Branches of the Campaign for Real Ale

**8 page Real Cider Supplement inside**  
October is CAMRA's Cider and Perry Month



Locals determined to save the Halfway House Inn at Box

## Outraged over Pub Closure



## Fleece Inn at Hillesley - a true Community Pub

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## 100 up at the Kings Head

These days it seems that when a tenant or landlord of a pub is resident for a period of just over a year that qualifies for some sort of longevity of service. This appears to be the case in many pub-co owned pubs, where disputes over rents and beer supply contracts tend to lead to ridiculously short tenancies. Against this background it is heartening to report that one Cotswold pub celebrates 100 years in the same family on 1st October with the present landlady still happily serving pints after an amazing 58 years behind the bar.



You won't find any fancy food menu at the Kings Head at Withington. Potatoes come served as packaged crisps rather than dauphinoised and seafood is sourced from jars of cockles. There is a selection of beer behind the bar from Marstons, Youngs & Wells, Castle Rock etc, available straight from 500ml bottles.

Hook Norton 'Hooky' Bitter is served direct from the cask - racked in wooden stillages that have stood



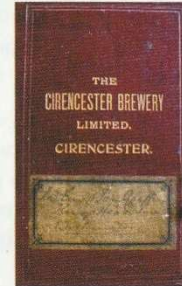
the test of time for decades. There's no widescreen 3D TV or the latest in digital audio technology here. Entertainment is provided by a pool table and a darts board. The last major refurbishment at the Kings Head took place in 1980 when the bar extension and new toilets were added,

although in recent weeks a new front door has been fitted. In short, nothing much has changed at the Kings Head for decades.

Ernest and Bessie Griffin came to the Kings Head on 1st October 1912, initially on a short term basis. The beers were supplied by the Cirencester Brewery Company. In those peaceful years before the outbreak of war in 1914 beer was cheap, strong and plentiful.

An old ledger clearly shows receipts for 72 gallon 'puncheons' casks of Cirencester beer... the locals must have had a considerable thirst!

Ernest and Bessie paid the Cirencester brewery £2.10s.0d. for their rent. Those halcyon days were abruptly disrupted by the ravages of war, resulting in restriction in licensing hours and a substantial increase in beer tax.



In 1924 the Compasses Inn in Withington closed down, leaving the village with just two pubs - the Mill Inn and the Kings Head. Ernest and Bessie had been persuaded by the brewery to remain at the Kings Head and in 1929 they had their first child, a daughter named Coralie, who was born at the pub.



A small cottage behind the pub became integrated into an enlarged Kings Head in the 1930's. An old inglenook fireplace in the bar area of the Kings Head was once part of the cottage and the internal door leading to the lounge bar (the original pub) now has no purpose and is blocked off. Perhaps this building work was funded by new owners



H&G Simonds, brewers of Reading, who had taken over the Cirencester Brewery in 1937.

When Ernest Griffin died in 1949 his wife, Bessie, took over the running of the Kings Head. In the late mid 1950's Simonds Brewery were keen to relinquish the licence of the Kings Head so that they could transfer the licence to their proposed new pub in the Beeches Farm estate in Cirencester. Bessie, however, refused to budge and continued to serve her customers at the Kings Head. Frustrated by her stubbornness, Simonds decided to sell the freehold of the pub to her in 1956 and eventually lapsed the licence of the nearby Waggon and Horses in Chedworth in order to open their pub in Cirencester - the Golden Farm Inn.

Meanwhile Coralie had married Peter Taylor on 3rd September 1949. This was exactly ten years after Neville Chamberlain had made his historic broadcast telling the nation that Britain had declared war on Germany. As part of his wedding speech Peter quipped that "War had been declared again!" Peter and Coralie took over the licence of the Kings Head, which was now a freehouse.



The beer on offer in the 1970's was Whitbread 'West Country' Pale Ale. I first visited the Kings Head before it was enlarged in 1980 and remember, with some amusement, that the outside gents urinals consisted of simple sloping guttering built at a height of about three feet from ground level. A significant proportion of 'processed' Whitbread PA ended up on the very wet floor!

After Peter passed away in 1978 the licence was transferred into Coralie's sole name. 34

years later 'Mrs T', as she is affectionately known, still has her name above the pub door. She lives with her son, Donald, who helps behind the bar as does her second son, Martin, who lives in Chedworth. Not forgetting her faithful springer spaniel, Tilly



The Kings Head is a remarkable survivor, a proper traditional locals pub where the emphasis is firmly on drinking rather than dining. You are assured of a friendly welcome from 'Mrs T' and a guaranteed 'waggy tailed' greeting from Tilly. Thank you Mrs Taylor, Donald and Martin for making the Kings Head such a wonderful place.

#### **CAMPAIGN FOR REAL ALE GLOUCESTERSHIRE BRANCH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Notice is hereby given that the 38th Annual General Meeting of the Gloucestershire Branch of the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) will take place at the **New Inn**, Northgate Street, Gloucester at 7.45pm on Wednesday 24th October, 2012.

Nominations are invited for the offices of Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer and for four ordinary committee members. They should show the candidates name, the office for which he/she is nominated, the names and signatures of the proposer and seconder and the candidate's signature to indicate his/her willingness to serve. Candidates, proposers and seconders must be members in good standing of the Gloucestershire branch of CAMRA.

Nominations, as well as any motions for debate at the meeting should be sent to the Secretary: Mr Martin Parker, 68 Cirencester Road, Charlton Kings, Cheltenham, GL53 8DA, or may be handed in at the meeting.

**November 6, Ale Tasting at the Talbot, Ripley.** Thames Valley and Fleur de Lys helped celebrate this annual event.

**November 16 Pyrford Scouts.**

**November 20, 2012. AGM at All Saints Church Hall, Weston Green**



Present: J.Walsh (Squire), J Elkins (Bagman), F.Smith (Treasurer), P.Turner (Ragman), , S.Tovey ( Webmaster), A.Bull, J.Hare, B.Irwin, J.Petts, C.Stokes.

**Roll of honour:** The Squire read out the names of deceased TVMM members: Jim Brooks, Tony Brown, Robin Cobb, Peter Dashwood, Amnon Derrenberg, Hugh Gibson, John Glaister, Siward Glaister, John Hall, Martin Jolly, Alun Jones, Norman Keam, George Lawrence, Dick Mussen, Derek Paynter, Christopher Penton, Ted Perry, Gordon Ralph, Cyril Smith, Gordon Smith, Mervyn Stanley, Phil Sylvester, Bill Tofts.

**Website:** Steve reported that website fees were still modest and available space had been increased. He had loaded more photographs and asked for more. John W. noted that he regularly updated the TVMM Facebook site with news of recent events past and to come and had about 60 followers.

**Publicity:** It was agreed to purchase another batch of beer mats and to prepare a handout in time for Christmas. It was also planned to produce an e-mail Christmas Card.

**Sticks and Animals:** Dick (in absentia) appealed for a recruit to give the animals outings. He was particularly honoured to have been presented with Ron Duncombe's waistcoat. (Ron was the original hobby horse rider.) He intended to cut more sticks from Jenny Glaister's forest in December.

**Ragman:** Phil had kitted up two new members during the year and had enough kit in stock for 5 new members. He had no plans to buy more materials but would be pleased to receive any donations of "historic kit", which would be put to good, active use.

**Accounts** Cash in the bank had fallen from £3,835 to £3,287 over the year, mainly because of three one-off events - subsidies for the TVMM 60th birthday party (£532.86) and for the visit to Kröv (£435.77), and the hire of halls following the closure of The Foley Hall in January (£538). Four fee-paying events had raised £850 and bags had totalled £869.85, of which £467.70 was collected on Boxing Day.

It was agreed that annual minimum subs for 2013 should be held at £20/year for active and country members, but should remain voluntary. Active members had been paying £2/head on practice night. It was agreed that this should be increased to £3.

**Bagman:** There had been around 30 dancing events since the last AGM, including visits to Kröv, the Cotswolds, and the Forest of Dean, and a 60th birthday party after the Claygate Flower Show with guests from Spring Grove, Ewell St.Mary and Phoenix Clog. The side also danced for two Scout Groups at Oaklands and Pyrford, at the Broadwood Day of Dance, Painshill Park, Whiteley Village and a selection of local pubs. We had enjoyed dancing with Ewell, Fleur de Lys, Phoenix Clog, Spring Grove and others during the year, and the Squire and Bagman had performed briefly in the Vaughan Williams opera Hugh the Drover for Hampstead Garden Opera.

Following sudden ejection from the Foley at the end of January practices had been organised hurriedly at three locations in early 2012. For the 2012/13 winter we had settled in to the All Saints church hall in Weston Green and Marnies Village Inn (aka The Alma) next door.

**Squire:** With limited resources the side was dancing well, though not athletically. We gave a very good account of ourselves at the Kröv dance festival where we had received many favourable comments from audiences and other dance groups. Jan Lucas had run a musical instruction evening this autumn and more might be planned. The standard of dancing from our limited core of dancers, enhanced from time to time by country members had continued at a good standard and had generated some plaudits during the year. Golden oldie dances would continue to be revived to join the current repertoire of mixed traditions, with an emphasis on distinguishing the differences in dancing between traditions. The Squire was pleased that the two new members, Sam and Chris, had continued with us and hoped for more recruits. He also thanked the musicians for their regular and enthusiastic support and the Bagman for his efforts during the year with particular reference to the hard work needed for Kröv and the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary day.

**Election of Officers:** The following officers were re-elected by acclamation:

**President:** Chris Ridley      **Squire:** John Walsh    **Bagman:** John Elkins

**Treasurer:** Fran Smith      **Ragman:** Phil Turner    **Webmaster:** Steve Tovey

**Animals and sticks:** Dick Keen

**Fixtures for 2012:** Tuesday night practices will continue at All Saints until mid-April, from when we will dance out on Tuesdays through to early September, and then back to practices.

This year's Christmas events will be Claygate Christmas Lights (December 1) and Boxing Day (December 26). There will be a Bagman's Night Out early in 2013. The club had been invited to Ravensbourne Ale (Saturday March 23), Oxford Folk Weekend (April 19-21), Broadwood Day of Dance (Saturday May 11), Datchet Day of Dance (Saturday June 29), Martlets Ring Meeting, Chichester (July 5-7) and would attend those which enough dancers/musicians committed to. Other "weekend events" were Claygate Flower Show (Saturday July 20), The Cotswolds weekend (August 23-26), The Forest of Dean weekend (October 4-6). A full programme of Tuesday pub dancing with a range of friendly dance groups was being planned.

John Elkins , TVMM Bagman, November 23, 2012

### **December 1, Claygate Christmas Lights**

**December 21. Funeral of Angela Coombs** A small Thames Valley party travelled to Southampton. Angela had been a long-time friend and follower of Thames Valley, and Countryside Morris. A white dove [was released outside after the ceremony and there was some dancing.](#)



**December 26 Boxing Day, Claygate** The five pubs as usual: The Swan, The Foley, The Hare and Hounds, The Winning Horse, The Griffin. This was the first Boxing Day with the reduced space outside the Foley and we tried dancing on the small terrace by the garden. Not a great success. It had been

raining and poured down when we got to the Griffin where we danced in the fenced garden area under a large umbrella with its post in the middle of the set. Not very convenient nor effective, but since this was the fifth pub of the day we didn't seem to care!

## 2013 LOG

**March 14, TVMM Bagman's Newsletter** We've been firmly esconced in the parish hall of All Saints, Weston Green for practices all this winter, in the absence of a practice room at the Foley Hotel - yes, that's its official name now. We'd rather be in Claygate so I'll do the rounds of the possible locations soon and hope that we can find a regular slot for next winter.

It looks as if the TVMM horns are going to be making their way back to the West Country, where they've been nestling in a dark corner of Peter Jones' property (Twitchen) for who knows how many years. They're currently making a nuisance of themselves in my garage in Claygate but are soon (fingers crossed) going to be picked up by a member of Trigg, who's going to whisk them off to a new stable in Cornwall. I (we) thought it best to hand them over to someone who'd be likely to use them and Chris Ridley asked our old friends in Trigg, who surprised him by saying yes please. If that deal falls through, we have at least three other options. Chalice MM (from Brent Knoll, near Burnham on Sea) have also been in touch; and a Mr. P. Underwood of no fixed abode has suggested that Chobham St. Lawrence Morris might be interested, but they haven't been in touch. The third possibility is to hang them in Jenny Glaister's garage, where they lived in the days when TVMM used them for the Abbots Bromley Horn Dance at Jenny and Siward's mid-summer garden parties. The balance of evidence is that Cyril acquired the horns from Bushy Park a long time ago. So they are much travelled, from Surrey to Somerset and back again and now to Cornwall. Bon voyage.

**March 19, All Saints, Weston.** We showed the morris to the Brownies who use the Parish Hall before the TVMM practice session.

**Thursday 18th April, Dorney Court near Eton.** We danced for hire (£400) for a corporate "3 day incentive event", with a 'village fete' style activity morning. The main event turned out to be a knockout croquet tournament with TVMM teaching the losers to do a Morris dance in 15 minutes. The trainers were (probably) John W, John E, Phil T, Mike S, Chris, Fran, Barry, Jimbo, Dave D, John H, Robin of Acton Beauchamp.

**Saturday/Sunday April 20th/21st - Oxford Folk Festival** This was our first visit to the Folk Festival, although we asked not to be included in the official timetable, leaving the Bagman free to take the side round some of his old haunts (pubs). We assembled on Saturday morning at 11.00 at Carfax and then by way of the Radcliffe Camera and proceeded rapidly to The Turf Tavern. Much, and many pubs later some of us (John E, John W, Dick, Mick Jenkins, Sam, Jan and Barry) found our way to the Sea Cadet Hall near Donnington Bridge, not far from the Park and Ride, where we shared the floor with, among others, a couple from Fleur de Lys.

There being no breakfast in the Sea Cadet Hall we walked into Oxford along the Isis on Sunday morning and found a caff opposite Christchurch serving minimal food and drink. Nowhere else was open, of course.

The Bagman had obtained permission to dance in the front quad of his college, St. Edmund Hall on Sunday morning, thinking that this would be a first for the Hall. The letter of reply said that would be fine "as long as it is not too early!! You know that students don't rise too early!!! We do actually have Morris dancing here every year on May Morning as we feed the Morris Men after the May Morning celebrations!" A couple of dances and a double jig by

John E and John W were followed by a short tour of the Hall and then back to the Camera and the Turf for final sessions.

**March 25.** The Bagman heard from Wendy Brooks - daughter of Jim – that Jim’s wife Kath had died earlier that month.

**April 23, St. George's Day** Ewell Mick graciously consented to allow TVMM to invite themselves to join Ewell MM at The Willoughby Arms, Kingston in the evening. Ewell had been dancing in the City all day and finished off with a session at the Willoughby. John W wrote: Last night was a typical Ewell night out. They had been out all day and were pretty tired by the time we arrived. Trouble on the roads so Fran was held up and we had to dance with just John P and only five dancers. Not our finest hour. By the time Fran and others arrived, Ewell wanted to go inside and play and sing. A good time there though and we did a bit of dancing inside. The pub had a beer festival going and had 23 beers on! Talking to him, he mentioned that he had one brewed in Claygate at the Brightwater Brewery which is in someone's garage in Beaconsfield Road it seems. I think it only started production in February. Did you know about it? I drank a pint of his Little Nipper - just 3.1% but quite a passable (not very bitter) flavour. (I wonder what ever happened to Brightwater.)

**April 26 Chobham.** Chobham MM asked if they could lend them our horns for the Chobham Carnival, which we did, although we didn’t accept the invitation to dance.

**May 7, Marneys Village Inn, Weston Green.**

**May 11. Broadwood Day of Dance, Horsham.** I'm expecting Alan B., Barry, Chris, Dick, John E, John H, John W, Sam. Not too many musicians(!), but we're hoping to borrow music from other groups.

**May 16 - The Volunteer, Sutton Abinger** A message from Ewell Mick. “John and sundry at Thames Valley Morris Men, Nice to see you on Saturday at Horsham, shame that you went to the wrong pub, still! We have all the arrangements made for the two teams, yours as well as ours, to meet up at the Volunteer, Sutton. I dare say that we will start dancing at 20.30 hrs precisely and, as you know, we always start on time. There will be a music session afterwards and if you can have all your members available to do a song or dance, that would be wonderful, especially that Squire of yours. I feel that it is going to be a great occasion, in fact, so much so that I shall be in Crete on that very day but please enjoy yourselves without me. Manly love, Mick and Kevin ”

**Saturday, May 18 - Fawley Hill Steam and Vintage Weekend** We were contacted by the effusive **Judy, Lady McAlpine**, wife of Sir William who asked if we could perform at their extensive charity event near Henley. I asked if we could bring wives/loved ones free since we would be giving our services free, expect for a nominal tea & cakes charge. “I have told the Security people to expect you. Say the magic words 'MORRIS MEN". Come to the "office" and let us know when you wish to dance. Tea and cakes etc will be provided!” Tea and cakes turned out to be a sumptuous corporate buffet in a marquee, although it wasn’t totally clear whether we should have been in there. Our “spot” was a grassy compound circled by massive iron columns rescued from railway stations. (Sir William was a railway buff with enough cash (or influence) to have installed a full size redundant train set on a short track at the bottom of the field.) We danced outside the compound (there were camels inside) and

wandered around the field dancing where the mood took us. There was a parade of dozens of second world war vehicles. It was a bizarre and very enjoyable afternoon. There was a vast car park stretching over at least two separate fields – it took me about a quarter of an hour to find my car, even with the help of the Gurkha wardens.

**May 21, Thames Ditton, Ye Olde Swan.**

**May 28, The Saddlers, Send, GU23 6JQ** with Fleur de Lys.

**June 4 The Royal Marine, Lyne.** A modest but enthusiastic audience. Including a man who could clearly dance in time to the music, but resisted all attempts at recruitment. Maybe I upset him with the "what's the difference between a Morris Man and a Jew?" joke. Answer: Morris men are complete pricks. He then revealed that he was Jewish but shook my offered hand and remained friendly.

**June 11 The Castle Ottershaw** It was a cool evening at The Castle, forecast rain, and a smaller than usual crowd, including only Annie Stanley and Peter Binns from the TVMM groupies. But we had a moderately merry time, with Sam and Chris disappointed when we eventually stopped.

**June 14, Withington. Donald Taylor's funeral** We had a good turnout for Donald's funeral. Withington Church was so full when we arrived - just in time, and expecting to breeze in to empty seats, having stayed in The Mill a bit too long - that we had to walk the length of the aisle and sit in the choir seats. All Things Bright and Beautiful, The Day Thou Gavest, One More Step Around the World, some poems and addresses from the vicar and Martin all gave Donald William a good send off.



We did four dances back at the KH. Music: Pete Jones, Jan and Dave. Dancers: John E., Jan, Dave D., Tim, Dick, Mike V, Champ, Edward. Supporters: Kathy Dearsley, Maureen, Jane Melville, Sue Cawdron. Andy couldn't be there because he had to attend a parochial church council meeting scheduled to coincide with his return from Kazakhstan! It all went down well as the sun shone brightly - unlike most of last week. Collie and Martin were grateful but so busy knocking out drinks that they didn't escape from behind the bar.

Withington Dave reported that "a chap named Mark (white hair) who has been working in Singapore for several years appeared in the KH earlier in the year, was with the side up until the 90's and knew you all – asked to be remembered to you all". He told Dave how he (Mark) and Jan were crossing a railway after a good session and Jan ended up playing on a barrier when it began lifting him into the air....

**June 19, Richmond, Spring Grove's Summer Do.** We danced with Spring Grove, Yateley, Ewell and Greensleeves at The White Cross and the Barmy Arms.



**June 29, Datchet Day of Dance** Bacon butties in the WI Hall in Datchet village, by train to Windsor then, with Aldbury, DBM, Whitethorn, Hoddesdon, and Taepas Tump dancing at The Post Office, The Guildhall, Windsor Shopping Centre, The Waterman's Arms (Lunch), Alexander Gardens, Windsor Bridge. Train back to Datchet for tea and plenty of cake, mass dancing, followed by exhaustion A brilliant day.

**July 2, The Bells, Staines.**

**July 5/7 Thames Valley Challacombe Tour Friday** Gather at West Barton Gate, for running buffet. No doubt sloping off to the Black Venus as time allows. **Saturday 6** Poltimore Arms, Yarde Down; Sportsman Inn, Sandyway; Royal Oak, Winsford; Barbeque at Twitchen Farm; Black Venus, Challacombe. **Sunday** Exmoor Forest Inn, Simonsbath, Then free.

**July 16, The Parrot, Forest Green,** with Box Hill Bedlam. "We had a good evening with Box Hill Bedlam at The Parrot last night, and Jim Barclay claims to have met an Australian relative of Tim Cawdron there, but couldn't subsequently prove it."

**July 20 Claygate Flower Show.** Later start than usual, 1.30, with no guests. The Winning Horse, roam around the Flower Show and dance over by the tea/cricket pavilion, The Hare and Hounds (beer festival), the Arena at the Flower Show, back to The Hare or go home. Alan B, Chris, Dick, Fran, Jim B, John E, John P, Mick J, Phil T, Mike S and Steve T.

**July 30. The Anchor, Pyrford Lock with Jack Straws.**

**August 6. The Harrow, Compton with Fleur de Lys**

**August 13. The Castle Ottershaw.**

**August 20. The Phoenix, Sunbury, with Spring Grove**

**Friday/Monday August 23/26. The Cotswolds.**

Friday. Camping and an evening at the Kings Head.

Saturday. We dance at **The Swan, Southrop, The Victoria, Eastleach.** (lunch), the **Eastleach fete**, to buy second-hand books and dance for our tea, the Kings Head until 6.30 when we dance at **The Kilkeney Inn, Andoversford.** And so to bed, or **The Kings Head.** How about a themed music evening this year? The musicians could all play Morris tunes and the rest of us could watch Match of the Day in the other bar.

Sunday. 12.00 Process from the Kings Head to **The Mill**, where we may dance. (Back to the Kings Head to dance a bit, eat a bit, sleep a bit, have tea (Please bring cakes). 6.30 Dance (and dine if you wish) at **The Bathurst Arms**, North Cerney. The rest of the weekend is yours.

**September 3rd, The Griffin, Claygate.**

**September 7, Ashford** Hello Everybody, Phil and I are having a party to celebrate my birthday (It's the big 60) on Saturday 7th of September. You are all invited to come along



from 3.00 pm until whenever. Food and drink will be provided. If anyone has instruments and would like to bring them then please do so. Lots of love, Lesley

**September 10, The Swan, Esher.**

**September 14. Yateley Day of Dance.** Assemble at Yateley Manor School for tea and toast from 8.30, and leave at 9.30 on Tour 2 with Kennet, Hook Eagles (Border), Spring Grove (Kingston Morris), and Ellington. Dancing around Godalming and the Hogs Back Brewery, back to Yateley for tea and cakes and massed dancing in the centre of Yateley, then the feast. I'm expecting Alan Bull, Chris, Dave Dearsley (???), Dick, Fran, John E, John W, Phil, Mike Sugrue (???)

**September 24, Whiteley Village**

**Tuesday, October 1st,** First winter practice at All Saints, Western Green

**Weekend October 4/6. The TVMM Forest of Dean Historical Tour 2013** Edward and Maureen's precise instructions follow.

FRIDAY This year we shall be having fish and chips for dinner (and a veggie option for Mike V), with any desserts/cheese and biscuits you may wish to contribute. The house will be offering a very limited amount of alcoholic drinks. Further offerings will be gratefully received.

SATURDAY If you want a cooked breakfast, please bring the ingredients and cook it yourselves. (The usual cooks, Jan, John E, John W did). However, a continental breakfast will be available at Edward's insistence, despite the fact that he doesn't ever eat breakfast, until someone else has cooked it

Leave Cinderford by coach promptly at 10am.

10.30am-12.00 midday: - Dancing at St Briavels (King John's Hunting Lodge) at the George pub adjacent to The Lodge. This ancient keep is now used as a youth hostel but you will be able to look round it if you wish.

12.30pm-2.30pm: - Lunch Stop - Brockweir Inn. Brockweir has a Moravian Church and the tidal change point for the River Wye end at Brockweir quay.

3.00pm-5.00pm: Dancing at the Anchor Pub at Tintern Abbey. As the Abbey is an ancient monument it is not possible to dance there without completing a book-length form of application to the ancient monument authority, so Edward decided not to bother.

5.30pm: The Boat, Penallt/Redbrook. They still stock lots of ciders, country wines and guest beers, together with 1664 lager for you know who.

Back to Pisces Cottage for a critique of the day's programme, scintillating conversation and the usual TVMM one-upmanship contest (or jolly banter according to some folk.)

SUNDAY 12.00 midday:- The Royal Spring, Lydbrook for Sunday Lunch and Dancing. THEN home you go. (Seriously folks, should anyone wish to stay at Pisces Cottage on Sunday night they would be very welcome.)

The following, as usual, enjoyed a splendid weekend: Alan (B&B), Brian, Champ, Chris (B&B), Dick, Edward, Fran, Jan, John E, John W Mike V, Phil, Robin and Robin plus too many wags to remember.

**November 5th - Ale Tasting at the Talbot, Ripley.**

## **November 12, TVMM AGM, All Saints Church Hall, Weston Green**

Present: J.Walsh (Squire), J.Elkins (Bagman), F.Smith (Treasurer), P.Turner (Ragman), S.Alloo, A.Bull, J.Hare, B.Irwin, M.Jenkins, D.Keen, M.Snowden, M.Sugrue.

Roll of honour: The Squire read out the names of deceased TVMM members: Jim Brooks, Tony Brown, Robin Cobb, Peter Dashwood, Amnon Derrenberg, Hugh Gibson, John Glaister, Siward Glaister, John Hall, Martin Jolly, Alun Jones, Norman Keam, George Lawrence, Dick Mussen, Derek Paynter, Christopher Penton, Ted Perry, Gordon Ralph, Cyril Smith, Gordon Smith, Mervyn Stanley, Phil Sylvester, Bill Tofts.

**Communications:** John W. reported that he and Dick Keen had been regularly using the TVMM Facebook site to preview and report back on TVMM events - the site now had nearly 100 followers. He was also building up a library of archive photos on Flickr and planned to go live soon. Facebook and Flickr were both free, and easier to update than the website and, combined with e-mails from the bagman, he suggested that they should become the main channels for communicating with the side. The website should, however, remain as a focal point for contact with the outside world providing contact details for officers, a fixture list, practice details and other unchanging archive material. **This was agreed.**

**Publicity: It was agreed** to purchase another batch of beer mats (JW) and a stock of lapel badges (JE/SA).

**Sticks and Animals:** The side had just enough sticks to see us through 2014. Dick intended to cut more sticks from Jenny Glaister's forest. He again appealed for volunteers to goat and horse, both animals being healthy and in good spirits.

**Ragman:** Phil had kitted up one new member during the year and had enough kit in stock for 4 to 5 new members. He had no plans to buy more materials but would be pleased to receive any donations of "historic kit", which would be put to good, active use. It was confirmed that new members would not be charged for their initial kit.

**Accounts:** Cash in the bank was virtually unchanged from a year ago at £3,283. Income came mostly from subs (£1,148), paying events (£800) and bags (£614), of which the largest was the £302 collected on Boxing Day. Largest expenditures were on the hire of All Saints Hall (£1,001) - largely recovered by a £3/man/session charge - and a £500 donation to Woking Hospice. **It was agreed** that annual minimum subs for 2013 should be held at £20/year for active and country members, but should remain voluntary; active members should continue to pay £3/head on practice night; membership of the Morris Ring and EFDSS should be continued; and another donation of £500 should be made to Woking Hospice.

**Bagman:** 2012/2013 had been another busy season with more than 30 dancing events including four weekends - Oxford, Challacombe, Withington, and the Forest of Dean, and five other Saturdays - Broadwood, Fawley Steam Fair, Datchet, Claygate Flower Show, and Yateley. After discussion **it was agreed** that the side was happy with the balance of fixtures between Tuesdays and weekends. The side had danced for the All Saints Brownies, at a corporate event at Dorney, at Donald's funeral in Withington, and at Whiteley Village as well as at the usual selection of Tuesday night pubs. Our dancing partners had included Ewell, Fleur de Lys, Phoenix Clog, Jack Straws, Spring Grove, and Box Hill Bedlam.

Practices had become regular at All Saints church hall in Weston Green and there was little prospect of a venue becoming available in Claygate.

The Stags' antlers had been passed on to Trigg, and one of the side's two sets of rapper swords had been lent to Box Hill Bedlam.

**Squire:** Although no new apprentices had joined this year, the side has been pleased to see Brian Heaton joining us at our west country events and to welcome John Stanley back into the fold (fingers crossed!). It is encouraging to note that nearly 20 men have attended practice and almost 30 have danced out during the year. As has been the recent way, the dancing has been at a standard that seems to please our spectators, if not as athletic as in days of old. We continue to give an impression of enjoying ourselves - and perhaps we are. The repertoire has become narrower, especially when a mix of country and current-practicing members is present. The aim for this winter is to continue the re-introduction of older dances to practice, with a focus on Bledington and Adderbury plus other individual dances. The Squire thanked the men for their continued support throughout the year with particular thanks to the musicians and the other officers. In particular, thanks are due to the Bagman who keeps the side working smoothly.

**Election of Officers:** The following officers were re-elected by acclamation:

**President:** Chris Ridley      **Squire:** John Walsh    **Bagman:** John Elkins

**Treasurer:** Fran Smith      **Ragman:** Phil Turner **Webmaster:** Steve Tovey

**Animals and sticks:** Dick Keen

**Fixtures for 2014:** Tuesday night practices will continue at All Saints until Easter, from when we will dance out on Tuesdays through to early September, and then back to practices.

The main events planned for 2014 are

April 25/27 Oxford Folk Weekend

July 19 Claygate Flower Show

July 24/28 Lalinde

August 23/25 Cotswolds

September 5/7 Dartington Ring Meeting

October 5/6(to be confirmed) Forest of Dean

A Saturday Ale

More details of these and normal fixtures to follow.

**John Elkins, TVMM Bagman, November 17, 2013**

**November 13, Pyrford.** We helped about 20 Pyrford cubs qualify for a badge by showing them a couple of dances and then getting them to join in.

**December 19, Claygate** From the Squire: "Linda has asked me to thank you all for helping to make the party a big success. Just about everyone I spoke to liked the Morris dancing and wondered why there wasn't more of it - it seems that no-one got round to asking for more.

Thankyou also from me for all the cards and presents. I already had more books and cds than I could ever get round to reading or listening to - unless I live as long as Fran's aged relatives (did you know his uncle-in-law was officially the oldest son-in-law of someone or other who lived to be 156?) - but now I've probably got more hard liquor than I could ever drink. I may need to ask for help. Hope to see many of you on Boxing Day, John E.

**December 26, Boxing Day, Claygate. The usual five pubs.** Boxing Day went very well and we were incredibly lucky with the weather. We had large crowds at the Foley and the Hare and good crowds everywhere else and collected over £400 and maybe even some new members.

## 2014 LOG

**January 11, St.Nicholas Church Pyrford** A small squad danced at St Nicholas to commemorate Annie and Mervyn Stanley's 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary. "Dear John, I just want to say a big thank you for coming especially to dance on Saturday, I will now have another fabulous memory to add to my Thames Valley store. It was lovely day and amazing to think that 50 years have passed since that day and It also serves to remind me of the years that Thames Valley have been part of my life and the day that Fran first saw the Morris - and for him the rest is history. There are some lovely pictures that I will ask Helen to send to you, Love Annie.

**January 24 - Corporate event, Seven Dials** John Walsh and John Elkins earned some money for the club by coaching small groups of corporate folk (six teams of five each) to bond by learning Morris dancing. The teams were "on a taxi treasure hunt around London with 5 locations to visit during the day and so will be under some time pressure". We could have assembled a decent side from those who learned quickly.

**January 28 - All Saints Brownies** We danced for and with the Brownies who used the All Saints Parish Hall before our usual Tuesday night practice.

**February 15 - Kennet Ale** Five of us (Fran, Dick, John E, John W, Mick J) made the annual pilgrimage to Bracknell to eat and drink too much and sleep on the floor of the Scout Hall, plus Chris, Barry, and Champ, who did everything except sleep on the floor.

**March 25, Albany Ladies Club** John Walsh and John Elkins earned a few bob for the side by giving the ladies a Powerpoint talk on Morris and Thames Valley history, with dancing and music, at Burhill Golf Club.

**March 29, Betchworth** An evening "scratch Ale of Cotswold dancing" with Rampant Roosters and others to celebrate the Roosters' 21<sup>st</sup> anniversary.

**April 9, East Molesey.** John and John repeated their March talk, this time for the Elmbridge Ladies Probus Club, in the slightly less salubrious Royal British Legion Club in the car park behind the shops in Walton Road.

**April 23 St George's Day** John Walsh joined Ewell St,Mary in their annual tour of the City.

**April 26, Oxford Folk Weekend** About a dozen men had two official dance spots at Gloucester Green, and Oxford Castle on Saturday, but mostly danced where the mood took us. A few slept at the Sea Scouts Hall, most came and went on Saturday.

**May 7, The Running Horse, Leatherhead,** with Phoenix Clog.

**May 10 Bell Farm School, Hersham.** We assembled at the Royal George for a quick dance and lunch and then walked on to the school for a forgettable session in a gale. Nevertheless our contact, Anita Aston wrote "On behalf of the Friends of Bell Farm School I would like to say a big Thank You to you and all the other Thames Valley Morris Men who came and



performed at our May Fair. The Fair raised in excess of £6000, a phenomenal amount, which will go towards more playground equipment.”

**May 13, The Griffin, Claygate.**

**May 20. Thames Ditton, The George and The Angel.**

**May 27, The Castle, Ottershaw.**

**June 3, The New Inn, Send.**

**June 10, Richmond.** The Cricketers and The White Cross.

**June 12, Collis School, Teddington.** Alexander's teacher asked if Alexander's Grandpa could "come and show us some Morris Dancing and possibly have a little chat" on Thursday June 12th between 10.20 and 10.40. Grandpa John E obliged, with help from John W.

**June 21, Withington Fete.** We booked a 16-seater minibus for the day (but had to pay for the minimum of two days). John W drove, but with “interesting” directions from Fran, who guided us through unknown countryside. The bus squad was Alan B., Barry, Dick, Fran, John E., John H., John W., and Sam with Dave Craig, Mike V. and Robin travelling independently. We were treated to a free lunch by the Fete committee at the King's Head before moving on to Withington Court whose garden was hosting the fete. We danced a couple of sets and finished off the afternoon at The Mill.

The Fete Committee wrote: To the Visiting Morrismen Gentlemen Just a note to thank you, on behalf of the Fete Committee, for helping set the scene at our recent Fete. We hadn't appreciated, prior to the fete, just how far you were all coming and that makes us all the more appreciative of your efforts. We hope that your return journey was slightly easier than the one coming down. (Presumably we'd told him about Fran's directions.) Your performance on the afternoon was well received and the antics in The Millgardens afterwards proved that you were enjoying yourselves.

**June 24 - The Parrot, Forest Green, with Fleur de Lys.**

**June 30 - The Castle, Ottershaw with Datchet.**

**July 2, Inkpen, near Newbury.** Another lucrative “corporate therapy” training day. Teams of 6 wandered around the countryside, and when they found us we taught them how to do a Morris dance - in 20 minutes. John e, Jim Barclay, Dick and Phil taught the troops Oh Dear Mother and/or Constant Billy. Rampage, the organisers of the event also asked us to turn out for a similar event in Burton on Trent but we declined and passed the invitation on to Coventry MM.

**July 5 Yateley Yateley Day of Dance** The usual format, but at a different time of year. The squad was Steve Tovey, Barry, Champ, Chris, Dick, Fran, John H., John P., Sam. Apparently the day went well. The tours visited the Hogs Back Brewery and three good pubs with the Tilford Rural life centre thrown in as the ‘cultural’ spot.

**Tuesday July 8 - The Greyhound, Weston Green.** Rain lashed down, Germany crushed Brazil in the first half. No audience of course, but we danced in the bar for half a dozen regulars, and outside for a final burst when the rain eased up.

**Saturday July 12 - Ewell Day of Dance** We assembled at **The Green Man**, danced around Ewell including the fete, and then took a bus tour to somewhere and back to Ewell for the evening feast. We were short of music and dancers but hoped to persuade Spring Grove and Ewell to help us out.

**July 15, The Kingfisher, Chertsey**

**July 19, Claygate Flower Show** From the Bagman: "Without being too gloomy - moi? - our participation at the Claygate Flower Show on July 19th is on a knife edge." John E, Dick, John H, Chris, Champ, Sam and Alan plus three musicians (Fran, Barry and Julia) met at the tea pavilion at 2.00 p.m. and "practised" the six dances planned for the arena in front of a reasonable-sized audience of tea drinkers and stray folk and it went very well. Then to the Hare & Hounds where the bag paid for us to refuel in the heat, and then dance in the centre aisle. Big crowd, good session. A bit more refuelling, then back to the marquee ready for a 4.50 arena call. Several cups of tea and pieces of cake later it became apparent that it was well past 4.50. Explanation - they had re-arranged the presentation of prizes for fruit and veg ahead of us (I knew that) but it overran by 30 minutes (I hadn't expected that). So we went on to discover, inevitably, that our usual audience - people waiting for their prizes - had all moved on, as had most of the casual audience, leaving maybe 20 to 25 punters. We did our stint and were then encouraged by the organisers to do something with the Zumba ladies instead of which we headed back to the Hare. Which is where we soon were. Sam and Chris decided to inspect the pink bottoms of the Zumba ladies, but soon joined us.

Letter from John E to the Committee: Mike, Our main reaction to this year's event was that by appearing after the prize giving we predictably had an even lower crowd than in recent years. We were on so close to closing time that most of the audience had already left. Also no-one from the Zumba club approached us before the event so that there was no connection between us and the Zumba dancing (there is none), although a couple of our younger members joined in with them briefly. Overall we enjoyed dancing by the pavilion and maybe that's where we should appear next year rather than in an empty arena - we'd be happy to do a couple of sessions there. As I've been saying to the Flower Show organisers for several years, we prefer to dance close to the audience so that we can interact with them, so it doesn't work so well in an arena with no audience. John [They accepted this suggestion for 2015 and later years.

**July 22, The Bells, Staines.** John E, Dick, John H, Phil, Mike, Sam, Steve and Alan, plus Fran and Julia enjoyed a rather friendly and well supported evening. First round on the publican plus sandwiches afterwards.

**July 25, The Ram Folk Club, late of The Foley, now of the Old Cranleigh Club, Ditton.** We were offered a discount on the price of entry into the folk part of the evening but remained aloof, dancing outside the club in the interval. Thames Valley Lite - Fran, Dick, Phil, Alan and Me - put on a good show for the Ram Folk Club last night, with the skilful use of interludes of Morris history after each dance to allow us to catch our breath. Annie Stanley was at the club and said our effort was well received. "Excellent dancing, wonderful announcing and the music was beautifully played".

**July 29 The Phoenix, Sunbury.**

**August 5 - The Saddlers, Send (with Fleur de Lys)**

**August 12 - The Old Plough, Cobham (I'd call it Stoke d'Abernon)**

**August 14 – Harrow School** Another Rampage training event – our last. John W and John E plus recorded music taught seven groups how to do a morris dance in between making paper planes, playing games and who knows what else. Splendid views over London from the eyrie but, unfortunately, no tour of Harrow School. That was the last of a string of such events that Rampage put our way.

**August 19 - The Hare and Hounds, Claygate**

**August 26th The New Inn, Ham Common, with Spring Grove**

**August 22-24 The Cotswolds Weekend.** A somewhat different design for the tour this year by John Walsh.

**Friday evening** at the King's Head. The field and pub are available as usual.

**Saturday 12 noon: The Kings Head, Bledington,** Convenient for people coming from the South-East and just a half hour from Withington. **1pm: The Horse and Groom, Upper Oddington.** Ten minutes from Bledington. We haven't danced there for many years but now's the time to try again. The lunch stop - plenty of sandwich choices, some standard pub fare as well as more 'posh' stuff (well it is the Cotswolds). **3pm: The White Hart, Market Square, Stow-on-the-Wold.** Just ten minutes from Oddington. We'll dance in the square. There is beer in the White Hart if wanted, but there are also several hundred tea shops for those cream teas. Then it's back to Withington for a short break before we head out to the **Bathurst Arms at North Cerney for a 7pm start.** Food available for those who want. After that the rest of the day is your own, but I guess you'll head back to the Kings Head.

**Sunday** Standard Sunday lunch time with the **12 noon** procession to the Mill, dance there for the adoring hordes, back up to the Kings Head to dance and sleep for as long as we fancy. Then at **7pm: The Green Dragon at Cowley,** the final dance spot at this old haunt. Once again, food available. More apres-ski at the King's Head to round off the weekend.

John E was distressed to find no references in the schedule to the mediaeval wall paintings in St Nicholas, Oddington, and the "many very unusual features" of St.Leonard, Bledington. Even St Edward at Stow, despite the "thorough restoration" of 1873, retains most of the mediaeval corbels. And only one rather dismissive reference to beer! Must we only drink tea and wine?

**September 5-7, Peter Jones' 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday Party at Twitchen Farm.** Peter's daughter Helen had planned "an evening of song, dance, food and beer" based on Twitchen Farm. Several members of TVMM will be there including, I think, John W, John E, Dave Dearsley, Jan, Fran, Mike Vardy, Mick Jenkins, Phil Turner, although it's not an "official" fixture. **Friday:** Gather at the Black Venus Inn – last orders for food are at 9pm. **Saturday:** Breakfast at Twitchen - Fry up and/or DIY cereals, toast etc. 11am to 3pm - Walk from Hunters Inn, Heddon Valley and coach road to Woody Bay. Varying lengths of walk, lunch or just hanging around available. 4pm - Cream tea at the Farmhouse (please bring cake if you want to....and if you think we could eat it if you do !!) and Fran's Fantastic Film Show at Twitchen Farm. (Not the rude one) 7pm - PARTY - Much food, beer and featuring Peter's own

homemade cider. Music and dancing aplenty. 12midnight - a Minibus service will be available for those not staying at the farm who need to be poured into their beds and would prefer to collect their cars the next day. **Sunday** 9am to 10am - Breakfast at Twitchen again.

**September 27, All Saints, Weston harvest festival evening.** TVMM were invited to dance for their supper, which we did. Fran, Dick, Mick J, Phil, John W, John E, John H, Chris, Alan and Sam danced in the car park in front of the All Saints church door to entertain the arriving crowds before tucking in to a sausage/cheese ploughman's and crumble, and dancing a bit more inside. From All Saints: [Dear John, Revd Phillip Johnson and the organisers of our events have asked me to pass on this message:-](#) Dear Morris Men, Thank you so much for dancing at our Harvest Supper night. It made such a nice traditional start to our evening and the little ones were especially spellbound to see such a sight in our generally extremely boring car park! Many people have commented favourably about your dancing and one chap was moved to join in at the end until he felt the firm grip of his wife on his wrist with a face which warned 'No, don't you dare!' Hope we can tempt you to join us again for the summer Food Festival. Details when we have set a date. Kind regards, All Saints Weston

### **September 30, Thames Ditton Christmas Fair.**

**October 3/5, Forest of Dean Weekend.** Alan, Champ, Withington Dave, Dick, Edward, Jan, John W, Mike Vardy, Phil?, Robin (1 or 2?), Sam?, Chris? Fran signed up for another visit to the Forest. Edward's meticulous planning included accommodation at Pisces Cottage; a coach to ferry people from his house from stop to stop on Saturday. Food on Friday evening, (a choice of takeaways (fish and chips, Indian or Chinese) but there will also be chicken casserole, and other bits and pieces available too). On Saturday evening beef stew, cheese and biscuits, and a pudding will be available. Saturday and Sunday breakfast and a limited supply of booze – bring your own. In John E's absence Jan took responsibility for purchasing and cooking breakfasts. Margaret Brown turned up to mingle with her Morris friends.

On Saturday the coach left from The Railway Tavern, Cinderford at 10.30am and took the squad to Chepstow, where they danced at The Boat Inn, and the Three Tuns. Then to The Anchor at Tintern, The Boat at Penallt and back to Pisces Cottage. Sunday, own transport to the Rising Sun, Moseley Green, Parkend, Lydney, the lunch stop. THE END.

**November 4, - Ale Tasting at the Talbot, Ripley** Colonel Molyneux-Child (Lord of Dedswell and Papworth) again invited us to test the ale, maybe eat a sausage butty or two, and dance - with Fleur de Lys.

### **Tuesday November 18th - TVMM AGM at All Saints, Weston Green.**

Present: J.Walsh (Squire), J.Elkins (Bagman), F.Smith (Treasurer), P.Turner (Ragman), S.Tovey (Webmaster), D.Keen (Farrier), S.Alloo, A.Bull, J.Hare, B.Irwin, M.Jenkins, J.Petts, M.Sugrue, P.Winder.

**Roll of honour:** The Squire read out the names of deceased TVMM members: Jim Brooks, Tony Brown, Robin Cobb, Peter Dashwood, Amnon Derrenberg, Hugh Gibson, John Glaister, Siward Glaister, John Hall, Martin Jolly, Alun Jones, Norman Keam, George Lawrence, Dick Mussen, Derek Paynter, Christopher Penton, Ted Perry, Gordon Ralph, Cyril Smith, Gordon Smith, Mervyn Stanley, Phil Sylvester, Bill Tofts.

**Communications:** Steve T. said that the annual cost of the website was now £118. It was agreed that it was useful for providing the general public with officers' contact details, a fixture list for the current season, practice details and other unchanging archive material plus a members' area. It has a link to the side's Facebook account and will refer to Flickr when that site is ready. John W. reported that he and Dick continue to load news and photos of recent past and future fixtures on the side's Facebook account, which has nearly 130 followers. He has already loaded many archive photos on a Flickr account and hopes to go public soon. John E. continues to produce e-mails for active and country members.

**Publicity:** Sam had produced a batch of leather badges during the year which were generating income and publicity. He has about 120 in stock and would buy more as necessary. John W. agreed to procure another batch of beer mats.

**Sticks and Animals:** Dick said that the side had enough sticks to last through half of the 2015 season. He intended to gather more from Jenny Glaister, Peter Jones and Mike Vardy. He appealed for volunteers to goat and horse, which were both healthy and in good spirits.

**Ragman:** Phil had enough kit in stock for the two apprentices planning to dance in, and a stock of baldric badges and twill. This would need to be made up into waistcoats and baldrics. The badge templates could be used to produce sweaters and it was agreed to explore producing another issue of sweaters/jerkins/fleeces, concentrating on large sizes.

**Accounts:** The club has a slightly lower bank balance than a year ago - £3056 compared with £3,283. The largest expenditures had been on the hire of All Saints Hall (£1216, largely funded by weekly subs) and donations of £1000 to Woking Hospice. The main sources of income were annual and weekly subs (£1122), paying events (£1990) and bags (£639), of which the largest was the £419 collected on Boxing Day. The highlight of the paying events was three training sessions for Rampage Events which yielded £1550. **It was agreed** that annual minimum subs for 2013 should be held at £20/year for active and country members, but should remain voluntary; active members should continue to pay £3/head on practice night; membership of the Morris Ring and EFDSS should be continued. A donation of £500 should be split between the Ashford Cameo (Alzheimer's) Day Centre and Woking Hospice. A one-off donation of £100 would be made to the Morris Ring youth programme. Further donations would depend on income during the year.

**Bagman:** 2013/2014 had been another busy season with around 35 dancing events including the Oxford, Cotswolds and Forest of Dean weekends, the Ewell and Yateley Days of Dance, the Withington Summer Fete, and sessions with Phoenix Clog, Datchet, Fleur de Lys and Spring Grove. Three corporate bookings for Rampage Events and two lectures to lunchtime groups had yielded around £1750 but were not necessarily repeatable in 2015. There was only a single paid dancing engagement, at the Claygate Flower Show. Autumn and winter practices continued to be regular at All Saints Church hall in Weston Green.

**Squire:** One new apprentice (Paul W.) had joined during the year and two (Chris and Sam) had been invited to dance in on Boxing Day. 27 men had danced (or played) out during the year (including 8 country members) and practices had been well attended. The Cotswolds and Forest of Dean tours had been particularly enjoyable. Tuesday tours had in general attracted small crowds and small bags but the side was dancing as a side (i.e. together) even if not at the highest standard, and crowds appeared to be pleased. On a few occasions the side had had to rely on dancers/music from other sides. During the winter more "old" dances would be re-



introduced with particular emphasis on waver dances. The Squire thanked the bagman as well as the musicians and the other officers for their support during the year.

**Congratulations to Dave Dearsley**, who was recently awarded the Merchant Navy Medal for services to the International Maritime Employers' Committee and to industrial relations in the shipping industry.

**Election of Officers:** The following officers were re-elected by acclamation:

**President:** Chris Ridley      **Squire:** John Walsh      **Bagman:** John Elkins

**Treasurer:** Fran Smith      **Ragman:** Phil Turner      **Webmaster:** Steve Tovey

**Animals and sticks:** Dick Keen

**Fixtures for 2014:** Tuesday night practices will continue weekly at All Saints until Easter, from when we will dance out on Tuesdays through to early September, and then back to practices. The main events planned for 2015 are: April 18 Oxford Folk Weekend (Sat only); May 9 (Sat) Broadwood Day of Dance; June 20 (Sat) Withington Fete; July 4 Datchet Day of Dance; July 11 (Sat only?) Hartley Ring Meeting; July 19 Claygate Flower Show; August 28/30 Cotswolds; October ?? (to be confirmed) Forest of Dean. More details of these and normal Tuesday fixtures to follow.

**The Squire's revived dances for 2015:** **Bampton:** Glaister's Gambol (Speed the Plough);

**Oddington:** Highland Mary; **Bucknell:** Willow Tree.

**Fieldtown:** Trunkles and Leapfrog (Glorishears) - without the leapfrog!;

**Adderbury:** Beaux of London City (Shooting); **Ducklington:** Lollipop Man;

**Sherborne:** Old Woman Tossed Up; Lads a Bunchun; Bledington: Cuckoo's Nest;

**John Elkins, TVMM Bagman, November 20, 2014**

**November 30, Thames Ditton Christmas Fair.** The George and Dragon and the High Street with Kingston Morris.

**December 16, All Saints.** We danced in the car park accompanied by the All Saints Carol Singers.

**December 26, Boxing Day, Claygate** The usual five pubs. We collected £375.59. Among the three ladies in black who struck up an intimate relationship with the survivors in The Griffin at the end of (I've asked them to send photos) was the area representative, or like that, from The Club. She thought we'd go down well at Park. How could I charm the punters and make a bit of the club? Or maybe to enter us for the plate? [Nothing came



the day marketing something Jockey would go Sandown disagree? asked to next year money for she wants selling of this.]

## 2015 LOG

**January 6. Willoughby Arms, Kingston on Thames** The year began splendidly with the usual lively, friendly and beer-oiled evening organised by Ewell MM.

**February 2. Lt. Col. Molyneux-Child RIP** "The Colonel" was a somewhat eccentric character who had bought the lordship of the manor of Papworth and Dedworth and lived at Croxteth Hall in Ripley. He had organised an annual Ripley Assize at the Talbot Inn, which we knew as the Ale Tasting evening, where we danced for many years, often with Fleur de Lys. and feasted on his sausages. He also organised beating the bounds which we avoided.

**February 21. Kennet Ale, Bracknell**

**March 13. Pyrford Scouts** As usual we split the scouts into groups and taught them how to do a stick dance and a waver dance in the remote hope of eventually picking up some new members.

**March 16. All Saints Weston Green.** As Cyril used to write, "We showed the Morris" to the Brownies before our usual Tuesday practice evening.

**March 28. Betchworth, Rampant Roosters Scratch Ale** Chris, Dick, Fran, John Hare, John Walsh, Lester and maybe Sam and Champ signed up for this evening of Cotswold dancing in mixed sets with Roosters and their other guests. It was a fairly hectic evening, but good fun. Dance names were scrawled on a whiteboard and dancers made up sets as they fancied. Noisy and energetic in the main, with the music mostly played at a cracking speed.

**The following article written by the Bagman, John Elkins, appeared in the CLAYGATE COURIER in March 2015.**

It all began in 1952 when the Claygate Flower Show asked the Claygate Group of the English Folk Dance and Song Society to organise open air dancing and Morris dancing at the Show. None of the existing local groups could be there so a bunch of locals including Cyril Smith, who lived at 55 Hare Lane, taught themselves and performed four Morris dances at the Show on the Recreation Ground on July 19th.

They liked it so much that they organised "a meeting and practice at the Foley Hall, Claygate on 24th October 1952" and began to practice regularly at various. Invitations to dance in public started to arrive and a club was formed at a meeting at The Foley on May 1st 1953 when the provisional name - Mid Surrey Men's Morris - was changed to Thames Valley Morris Men. The first public appearance under that name was on Saturday May 9th at the Twilight Homes, Staines.

Weekly practices on Friday nights became regular and moved to Newlands House school for the winter of 1953/54.

Fortunately for us Jim Brooks started to keep a log book from October 1952 and Cyril Smith, who later moved to Telegraph Lane, eventually typed Jim's notes - and they're now on our website at TVMM.org.uk.

Over the years TVMM has settled into a pattern of dancing "out" in the summer and practising (now on Tuesday nights) through the winter. Mostly we dance in Surrey but there

have been many adventures to other parts of the UK and Europe. There were annual camping holidays in England, Ireland and Scotland in the early years, and visits to festivals in France, Germany, Holland which still continue. In particular we have visited the July wine festival at Krov on the Mosel several times and have fond memories of dancing in the street and on the floating stage. And, oh yes, the beer and wine.

Inevitably, over 60-odd years, we have developed several traditions. We dance round the five Claygate pubs - The Swan, The Foley, The Hare, The Winner and The Griffin - on Boxing Day; we try to get to the Claygate Flower Show every year; and we spend every August Bank Holiday at Withington, in the Cotswolds, where most of our dances originated.

We have maintained our close relationship with Claygate throughout our life and in fact held our Tuesday night winter practices at The Foley for 30?? years until the recent refurbishment. For the last couple of years we've found a new practice home at All Saints Church, Weston Green, not that far from Claygate. We can also be seen around Claygate from time to time, usually at one of the pubs. What is it about Morris Men and beer?

Why don't we have women dancers? We do what it says on the tin, I'm afraid. We were founded as a men's side and that's what we are. We have no hang-ups about women "dancing the Morris" and often spend dancing sessions with local women's sides.

The following three photos were included with the article.



**April 18. Oxford Folk Weekend (Saturday)** We assembled at Carfax Tower and danced in Radcliffe Square, beside the Radcliffe Camera (as seen in every episode of Morse, Lewis, and Endeavour), The Turf, The Pitt-Rivers Museum and other impromptu spots. This may have been the year when we made the acquaintance of the exotic Ashnah Belly Dancers, who we first thought were from eastern Europe but turned out to be based in Witney.

**April 30. Our President, Chris Ridley sent us one of his occasional typed letters**

Dear Subjects/Riparians, Your President is ever-mindful of our relationship, and I write with pleasure of the honour you did me many years ago, and which I am sure will continue for many years to come. I am well but find walking easier with a stick now; I still play for Trigg Morris Men though I use a little folding seat, now. Trigg and Bodmin Folk Club, as well as many household and garden duties keep me active. Perhaps you can reproduce the enclosed

photo of last year's Easter procession, showing Trigg's seven musicians processing through Launceston, to show Thames Valley that their president is indeed alive.

Easter here was a grand start to our season. The crowds at Lanhydrock were enormous in the spring sunshine. Our Thursday outings start next week and I enclose a few copies of our programme; perhaps someone can distribute them. As always, the invitation to join us is very genuine if you are ever in Cornwall (you will note the Squire of the Ring joined us in the procession photo.) This year we'll be attending Anker Ring Meeting, September 4 to 6, along with our female musicians. It is at Bulkington, midway between Coventry and Nuneaton. Will TVMM be there?

Enjoy your morris -- if indeed you are you still going; I haven't heard anything from you for a long time! I'd like to think I am President of an enthusiastic gang. Wishing you all a grand season, and in memory of all our past dancers, Chris Ridley (Proud president of Thames Valley Morris Men)

**May 9. Broadwood Day of Dance, Horsham**

**May 12. Chobham – The Four Horseshoes**

**May 19. The Parrot - Shalford** (with Fleur de Lys)

**May 26. Horsell, The Red Lion**

**May 31. Stan and Hilary Kilby's 50<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary, Warborough.** Tim Cawdron and Sarah Kilby set up a surprise visit to Oxfordshire. We assembled at the Six Bells and then burst in on the Anniversary Party in the Village Hall, where we danced and joined in the feasting. Stan wrote: "Many thanks from Hilary and myself for TVMM efforts at our 50<sup>th</sup> Celebration. We were both gobsmacked at your unexpected arrival, but it made a memorable occasion. Good to see some old faces in TVMM but equally pleasing to see new members giving it some wellie. My earliest memories of the Morris go back to my early TVMM days. A ring meeting at Ludlow in 1959 was my introduction, with Peter Dashwood, Norman Keam, John and Siward Glaister. Bill Toffs and others whose names have gone. Best wishes, Stan and Hilary. While dancing at the Six Bells, we were alarmed to discover that the chap watching us was a member of one of the Bampton sides. However, he was kind enough to approve of our version of the tradition.

Present: Aitken, Allo, Cawdron, Elkins, Irwin, Jenkins, Peter Jones, Keen, Oliver, Fran Smith, Stokes, Vardy, Walsh





**June 2. The Castle, Ottershaw**

**June 9. The Windmill/The Sun, Windlesham (with Yateley MM)**

**June 16. Richmond (Cricketers/White Cross)** “Our gallant little band performed well at Richmond last Tuesday and we were rewarded with a bag of £55.39.” - Fran

**June 20. Withington Fete** The King's Head being out of action we assembled at **The Bathurst Arms, North Cerney**, before moving on to the fete in the garden of Withington Court. We hired a minibus to transport the Surrey-based members to Withington (John Walsh drove). There was a major hold up on the motorways and, unfortunately, John allowed Fran to guide us through a tortuous route taking in the



Hog's Back, the Vale of Pewsey and Cheddar Gorge. We weren't very late! I think a button on Fran's concertina broke and Barry fixed it. Present: Craig, Elkins, Irwin, Jenkins, Keen, Lucas, Morris, Smith, Snowden, Walsh,

**June 25. Spring Grove Midsummer Evening, Twickenham**, with Kingston Morris, Ewell St Mary MM, Spring Grove and Yateley at the White Swan, and the Barmy Arms.



**June 30. The Hare & Hounds, Claygate (with Phoenix Clog)**

**July 4. Datchet Day of Dance, Datchet and Windsor** Breakfast and dancing at Datchet before taking the 10.47 train to Windsor. John W wrote: “A very enjoyable day yesterday. We had seven dancers: Mick, Champ, Dick, Chris, Phil, Paul and me plus Barry as the music. Barry is continuing to grow into the role and was helped by Phil, Spring Grove Gerry and Yateley Rod. All went pretty well. We did some decent dancing in good, busy places. Had quite a lot of dancing all in all for a hot day. The Yateley chaps were on their usual good form, Datchet were welcoming and, in particular, Roy was very pleasant to chat to. Kingston were their usual mediocre selves and the two ladies clog sides were suitably cloggish! By the time we finished dancing at six, everyone was worn out and no one stayed for the pub session afterwards. A good day though.

**July 7. The Greyhound, then Marneys, Weston Green**

**July 11. Ewell Day of Dance** (The Famous Green Man, Procession to The Lockup for 'Refreshing the Wastrel', the Fete, Lunch at The Wheatsheaf. Charabanc to Pyrford & Wisley Flower Show, Firebird Brewery, The Scarlett Arms, Walliswood. Feast at the Famous Green Man, Ewell. Apart from Ewell, there were Boxhill Bedlam & Black Swan, Kingston Morris and Phoenix Clog. The Programme notes mentioned that “TVMM played a great part in helping Ewell St Mary’s Morris Men when they first started (in 1979) as they did with Spring Grove MM, formed in 1977. John Elkins wrote: “The only disappointment about last Saturday at the Ewell Day of Dance was when Eric condemned the leftovers from lunch just because they'd been transferred to the coach, where they sat near the engine on a blazing hot day for three hours. Never mind, we had plenty of dancing and dancers and musicians all day and we all had a fine time.”

[We did not go to the Claygate Flower Show because we had committed to go the Ewell Day while the Claygate Flower Show were dithering about the date for the Claygate Show.]

**July 14. The Three Horseshoes, Laleham.** John E: “We haven't danced here before, at least not in my time at Thames Valley, and I wonder if they have three-legged horses in



Middlesex. The church has some original Norman arcades, although most of the church is a Georgian rebuild. The only other Norman arcade in Middlesex is, as you will remember, at Harmondsworth. Note to the bagman, we must dance again at Harmondsworth barn and church before they're demolished or rebuilt to make way for more smelly aircraft." From Annie Porter, Pearmain Pubs: Hi John - so sorry the Three Horseshoes was a bit of a wash out.... typical eh! I gather they had lots of people down to watch too. Shame. Can you confirm the Wheatsheaf for the 18th August as would like to advertise!

This was the year when we firmly established our link with Pearmain. We subsequently danced regularly at several of their pubs, including The Three Horseshoes (Laleham), The Wheatsheaf (Esher), The Old Plough (Cobham), The Onslow Arms (West Clandon), The Red Lion (Horsell).

**July 23, The Winning Horse, Claygate** A dancing and music evening with Ewell MM.

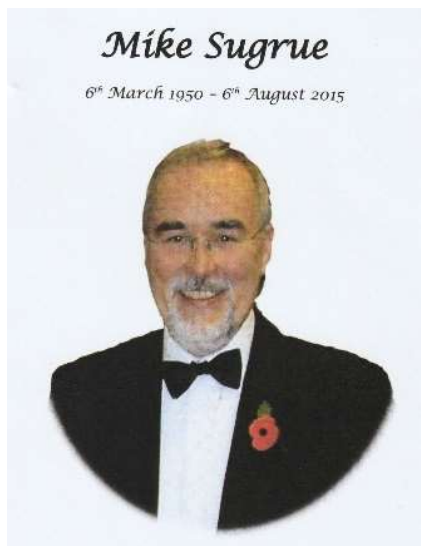
**July 28, The Parrot, Forest Green,** with Box Hill Bedlam.

**August 4, The Saddlers, Send** (with Fleur de Lys)

**August 11. The Bells, Staines**

**August 18. The Wheatsheaf, Esher** Phil Mundy wrote: "Hi John, It was good to meet up with you, John W, and the side at Esher last week. I look forward to joining you at practise when it restarts next month, if you can let me have the date. I have something booked for 29th Sept, but otherwise I'm clear for Tuesdays. Best regards, Phil Mundy." What ever happened to Phil?

**August 24. Mike Sugrue's funeral at St Michael's Church, Ashford.**



TVMM attended in strength and danced Mike's coffin up to the altar. Then dancing outside the church, at **Hanworth Crematorium** for the committal and then, at length, at St Michael's Church Hall. We failed to get the priest to join in the dancing, but had a fine time nonetheless.

**August 25. The Old Plough, Stoke d'Abernon**

**August Bank Holiday Weekend, The Cotswolds** The Kings Head had been closed for some time and its future was uncertain, with Collie (Coralie) happily installed in a residential home in Cheltenham. Thanks to a lot of groundwork put in by Dave Craig, who lived in

Withington, we were able to hire the Withington Jubilee Hall for indoor camping - just across the road from The Mill - and use the field next door to the hall for outdoor camping with continuous access to the well-stocked kitchen and the toilets. We had several communal breakfasts, teas and dinners in the Hall and a certain amount of booze was shifted. The £110 hire charge for the hall “laughably too little” so the Bagman upped it to £150



**Friday evening.** Indoor/outdoor camping/Camp cooking or eat at The Mill.

**Saturday** Full Cotswold Breakfast followed by The Kings Head, Bledington, The Black Horse, Naunton, The Farmers Arms, Guiting Power (buffet lunch), Chedworth Village Agriculture Show and Fete (tea), The Mill, where the manageress allocated a room for our use during opening hours big enough to hold all those who enjoyed listening to Morris tunes - an acquired taste.





**Sunday** Full Cotswold Breakfast followed by procession from the Kings Head, where we met Collie's son Martin, to The Mill. In the afternoon we danced for Collie and some of the other residents in one of the lounges at her care home in Cheltenham and she joined us in Bonny Green in her speedy wheelchair. Although Collie looked well and obviously enjoyed the occasion it seemed very unlikely that she would return to the Kings Head, and even less likely that it will continue - or reopen- as a pub. Then The Plough, Prestbury, Tea at the Village Hall, The Seven Tuns, Chedworth, and back to Withington. Both The Mill and the Seven Tuns (and maybe all the other pubs in the area) closed very early on Sunday evening, but after hours we had the Jubilee Hall to return to, where the opening hours were unlimited.



Apart from that there were very few negative comments (too few pickled eggs was one) and the upshot is that we have an alternative base in Withington for future Cotswolds tours if we want to use it. Something to decide at the AGM in November,

### **September 8. The Old Swan, Thames Ditton**

**September 19. Yateley Day of Dance** The squad was: Alan, Barry, Chris, Dick, Fran, John E., John P., John W., Mick, Paul, Sam. One of the high spots was dancing blindfold at the Ale.

**October 2-4. Forest of Dean.** Friday Evening, Pisces Cottage (Edward and Maureen's).

**Saturday** The Punchhouse and Monmouth Shire Hall, The Robin Hood (lunch), Monnow Bridge Museum, The Anchor at Tintern, The Boat, Penallt. **Sunday** Breakfast at Pisces Cottage, The Rising Sun The Rising Sun, Moseley Green, Parkend (lunch).



**October 23. St.Mark's Church, Peterborough.** Memorial Service for Ronald (Ron) Duncombe, a very early member of Thames Valley first mentioned in the Log in July 1954.



**Ron as "The Betty" (1954)**



**The Horse was made by Ron and is still in use today (1972)**

**October 24. Thames Ditton Fair/Farmers Market**

**November 2. Roy Dommett RIP [The following piece was written by Phil Underwood for publication by the Morris Ring.]**

**Roy Dommett, Oddington and Thames Valley**

I have a recording of Roy Dommett from the early 80's when he came to the Isle Of Wight to teach Stanton Harcourt to the Men of Wight. (Incidentally my Dad, John Underwood, as well as being the then Foreman of MoW, had been a colleague of Roy's on the Black Knight/Black Arrow rocket programmes).

I recorded the workshop and Dad and I used to enjoy listening back to Roy teaching Brighton Camp to the rather overawed men, haranguing them with yells of "You hit him, you hit him, you hit him and he hits YOU! - HALF HEY!!"

Given his famous body shape we marvelled at what a superb dancer he was. My own cherished memory of this wonderful event is of the admittedly inaccurate but enjoyable image of an almost spherical body, topped with a great bearded head, levitating serenely above furiously whirling legs.

Dommett became a major influence on Thames Valley Morris Men in 1963 when he presented the side with the fruits of his research into the Oddington Tradition, which had died out in the early 20th Century. Dommett had come across Clive Carey's notes in the Cambridge University Library and was looking for a side to revive the tradition. Thames Valley was known as a prominent Ring side with a long pedigree: several members of the side having been dancing since the 1930's, including with the early Ring side the Curfews, from Chertsey.

In his log for February 13th 1963 Jim Brooks wrote: *"Pat Paterson brings Roy Dommett, Squire of the Border Men and member of the Ring Advisory Council, also a keen collector. He has collected information at Oddington from Gloucestershire, traditional dances which have not been performed since the 16th century. He wishes to come here and sort his notes out and to practice his interpretation of these dances. I agree to co-operate and ask our side to support me. We go down to the basement and the three of us get going, full of fun and noise"*

The side under the then squire, the late Siward Glaister, interpreted the side dances and Jim Brooks the jigs. John Glaister interpreted the music with his own subtle and restrained style of melodeon playing, eventually recording the tunes for the Morris Ring.

After many evenings in Jim Brooks' cellar, studying the notes, they danced it for the first time. Later in the 1960s, as a mark of respect, TVMM proposed Roy Dommett for Squire of the Morris Ring. It was also fitting when in 1968 Clive Carey himself was laid to rest in Claygate, Surrey, Thames Valley's home village.

Meanwhile Dommett was also teaching his own looser and more flamboyant interpretations to other sides. However a purely personal view is that Thames Valley's interpretation of Oddington is the most satisfying form, restrained and disciplined, with an underlying passion and energy which took the side forward as one of the great post war Morris sides.

Jim Brooks used to say that the way you really learn to dance the morris is through the jigs - and for me the most satisfying are the Oddington jigs. For Thames Valley Morris Men Dommett's memory will forever live on through his gift of the Oddington.

Phil Underwood, sometime squire of Thames Valley, November 2015

[ It was at Jim Brooks' funeral that Roy taught us an Oddington dance (to the tune of Lord of the Dance) which we now call Jim Brooks.]

### **November 10, AGM at All Saints Church Hall, Weston Green**

Present: J.Walsh (Squire), J.Elkins (Bagman), F.Smith (Treasurer), P.Turner (Ragman), D.Keen (Woodman and Farrier), S.Allo, A.Bull, J.Hare, B.Irwin, M.Jenkins, P.Mundy, C.Stokes, P.Winder.

**Roll of honour:** The Squire read out the names of deceased TVMM members: Jim Brooks, Tony Brown, Robin Cobb, Peter Dashwood, Amnon Derrenberg, Hugh Gibson, John Glaister, Siward Glaister, John Hall, Martin Jolly. Alun Jones, Norman Keam, George Lawrence, Dick Mussen, Derek Paynter, Christopher Penton, Ted Perry, Gordon Ralph, Cyril Smith, Gordon Smith, Mervyn Stanley, Phil Sylvester, Bill Tofts and, most recently Ron Duncombe, and Mike Sugrue. He also mentioned Roy Dommett and Lt. Colonel J.W. Molyneux-Child, both good friends of TVMM. Dennis Salt died on the day following the AGM.

**Communications:** It was agreed that the annual cost of the website (£62.86 in 2014/5) was worth it to provide a point of contact for the general public with officers' contact details, a fixture list for the current season, practice details and other unchanging archive material plus a members' area. For current news there is a link to the side's Facebook and Flickr accounts.

The Facebook account now has 168 followers and is updated regularly by John W and Dick. John E. continues to produce e-mails for active and country members.

**Publicity:** Paul agreed to check out the use of Streetlife.com (a free service) for local advertising. Sam reported income of £179 from the sale of leather badges during the year (not included in the 2015 accounts). He had plenty of stock for 2016. John W. reported some resistance from pubs to using the TVMM beer mats. It was agreed that they should be handed out to audiences as additional advertising. It was also agreed that some generic leaflets (i.e. not including/waiting for fixtures detail) should be produced in time for Boxing Day.

**Sticks and Animals:** Dick said that stick stocks were low and needed replenishing. Various friends of TVMM (and tree surgeons) would be approached, with a preference for hazel. The goat and horse were in rude health, despite few outings because of low dancing numbers. Paul agreed to be cake-man on Boxing Day to free Dick for animal duty.

**Ragman:** Phil had adequate stocks to meet the foreseeable demand. Stock continued to be increased by donations of second-hand kit from retired members. John W's daughter was designing a logo for a purchase of sweaters/jerkins/fleeces/t.shirts/polo shirts/Hawaian shirts, concentrating on large sizes.

**Accounts:** The club finished the year with £2,571 in the bank, compared with £3,056 a year ago. The main explanation was that income from paid events dried up in 2015. The biggest expenditure (£1,204) was for the hire of All Saints Hall for winter practice. Subs paid by those attending practice (£3/night) were (£937.15 - don't ask) and the side made up the difference. The side also paid moderate subsidies for the Cotswolds weekend (£95) and the Forest of Dean weekend (£172). No need was seen for building up club funds in 2016. It was agreed that annual minimum subs for active and passive members should be held at £20/year, but should remain voluntary; active members should continue to pay £3/head on practice nights; membership of the Morris Ring and EFDSS should be continued. Donations would be made to the Ashford Cameo (Alzheimer's) Day Centre and Woking Hospice, the amount to depend on finances during the year.

**Bagman:** 2014/2015 had been another busy season. Some highlights had been the Oxford, Cotswolds and Forest of Dean weekends, the Ewell, Yateley, Broadwood and Datchet Days of Dance. We danced with several of our friends, including Ewell, Fleur de Lys, Yateley, Spring Grove, Phoenix and Boxhill Bedlam. Due to a rescheduling of dates we did not dance at the Claygate Flower Show. Autumn and winter practices continue to be regular at All Saints Church hall in Weston Green.

**Squire:** John W. estimated that there had been 25 active participants in the year - 19 dancers (of whom 7 also played), and 6 musicians. Sam and Chris danced in on Boxing Day 2014 and our newest members – Paul W. and Phil M. were rapidly acclimatizing. Faithful (City) Robin had been encouraged to dance in. Dancing and music had not noticeably improved or faltered over the year and several favourable comments had been received from informed observers.

**Election of Officers:** The following officers were re-elected by acclamation:

**President:** Chris Ridley (his job is for life) **Squire:** John Walsh **Bagman:** John Elkins  
**Treasurer:** Fran Smith **Ragman:** Phil Turner **Webmaster:** Steve Tovey

Animals and sticks: Dick Keen.

Sam, Chris and Paul responded to a-call for help with the organization from the younger members of the side. Work will be found for them. Chris agreed to write an account of the Boxing Day Tour.

**Kit standards:** Dick suggested a review of the official recommendations about badges and kit. After a lively discussion it was agreed that breeches will not be worn. Badges (whether pins or sew-ons) should be restricted to TVMM, Ring and other organisation personal to the wearer. They should be worn discreetly, if at all, preferably on hats. Shoes should be black, preferably leather. Shirts should be long-sleeved.

**Fixtures for 2016:** Tuesday night practices will continue weekly at All Saints until May and will then resume in September. Tuesday evening dancing out in May and September had not proved successful in 2015 because of poor weather and early sunsets and might be restricted in 2016 although this would lead to more practice evenings - and expenditure. The general feeling was that visiting Withington for the summer fete was a long journey for the amount of dancing resulting. It might not be repeated in 2016.

The main events planned for 2016 (subject to TVMM being invited) are: the Oxford Folk Weekend (Sat only); Broadwood Day of Dance; Datchet Day of Dance: Thaxted Ring Meeting; Claygate Flower Show; Ewell Day of Dance; the Cotswolds weekend; Yateley Day of Dance; the Forest of Dean weekend. A weekend in Somerset to celebrate Dick's son's wedding at Wookey, a Bagman's Night Out, a Summer Ale, and possibly a visit to the Wallingford Bunkfest were also planned.

**Dances for 2016:** John W. planned to concentrate on the following 'new' dances for 2015-6:

**Fieldtown:** Trunkles, Leapfrog (Glorishears) - without the leapfrog; **Adderbury:** Sweet Jenny Jones; Gustav's Dance; **Bucknell:** Saturday Night; **Oddington:** Highland Mary, Cock of the North; **Sherborne:** Old Woman Tossed Up, Lads a Bunchum, Go and Enlist for a Sailor; **Bledington:** William and Nancy, Cuckoo's Nest; **Badby:** Beaux of London City.

**Roy Dommett:** John E. suggested that, in view of Dommett's association with TVMM and the Oddington tradition, the side should develop an Oddington dance to be named in his honour. [This never actually happened.]

The meeting closed at about 10.15

John Elkins, TVMM Bagman, November 14, 2015

**November 19, Claygate Beaver Scouts** A showing of the Morris.

**November 22.** From Fran Smith: Roy Dommett's remarkable celebration service lasted two hours. Church completely full. Roy's wishes re charities are a Rocket Museum in Gosport, or more particular for us, funding for his huge archive of Video and DVDs of the Morris which has been donated to the EFDSS (Vaughan Williams Library) to which I suggest TVMM should send a donation in Roy's memory of say £100.

**November 25, Cecil Sharp House.** From the Bagman: I'm so excited. I was up at Cecil Sharp House yesterday looking at old copies of the Morris Dancer and went down to the bar (which was not serving) to eat my sandwich, cold potatoes and apple in peace. There was a swarthy fellow in there talking on his mobile about the pasa doble. What is the folk world

coming to I thought, but "whatever", so long as it's dance. A young woman then came in partly dressed and started munching her lunch, then a hairy man with equipment. He turned out to be a cameraman and the equipment was spotlights. He came over to Mr. Swarthy and said that he would want to talk to him about his views on Blackpool, and his other plans, and a penny began to drop. I asked them if it was OK to finish my lunch and the woman said of course, but the cameraman said: "Well, we are about to film an interview".



And the penny finally finished dropping. I was in the presence of Helen George and Alijaz Skorjanec from Strictly. She looked as good as the photo, but he looked a bit iffy and didn't appear to have shaved for a week. Foolishly I didn't invite them to the Claygate Christmas Lights switch-on, but I expect they'll be too busy practising for the finals. I was told that Strictly hire rooms there quite often so, needless to say, I shall be visiting Cecil Sharp House more regularly from now. John E.

**November 25, Dennis Salt's cremation** Dennis Salt's daughter wrote: "Hello John, I remember John Glaister well, he used to come for dinner with us every Thursday before he & Dennis went off to practice. I always told John it was the only day of the week we got a proper meal - charming child!"

**December 5. Platform Three, and Claygate Lights** and then to **All Saints Weston Green** We joined the church choir for community carols and danced to our own music and to the choir singing Good King Wenceslas before processing to the other side of Hampton Court Way to help light the church Christmas tree. The church ladies provided lots of cakes as well as lanterns and sent us a nice thankyou. We also made it into the Surrey Advertiser.

**December 18, Withington.** Our Withington correspondent Dave Craig reported that the Kings Head is up for auction - a sad day. He speculated that this was an opportunity for TVMM to acquire their very own Cotswold pub. If only ....

**December 26 - Boxing Day.** From the Bagman: "The Swan is closed for the time being so we shall start this year's tour at Platform 3, the pop-up pub in The Parade by Claygate Station - thus the name. It sells beer brewed in the Brightwater Brewery in Claygate, and we danced there at the Christmas Lights event a couple of weeks ago. The beer's good, the owner's keen, and it's only about 5 minutes walk from The Foley, which will give us no excuse for not keeping to schedule. So, for the first time ever the schedule was Platform 3, The Foley, The Hare and Hounds, The Winning Horse, The Griffin. [The new Boxing Day schedule was retained even after The Swan eventually reopened.] Colin Messer and Phil Mundy (and maybe others) from Spring Grove took part. Another innovation was that the dancers were encouraged to sing the words of Gustav's Dance while dancing. Some did. Fran wrote: We collected a staggering record amount of £555.85 and there is a little more to come from Shergar. Last year we collected £370.59. In light of the bag can I please make donations of £200 each to Woking Hospice and Cameo as "agreed" at the AGM. Chris Stokes did a jig at the Foley to dance in his new waistcoat, made by Linda Walsh.





## 2016 LOG

### **Tuesday, January 5. Twelfth Night Shenanigans at The Willoughby Arms, Kingston.**

TVMM swapped their first scheduled practice night of 2016 for a brilliant evening in a packed large room at The Willoughby, organised by Ewell MM, who provided a Lord of Misrule. Dancers and musicians from Black Swan, Box Hill, Ewell, Kingston, Phoenix, Roosters and TVMM filled the room and enthusiastically joined in with the dancing, party games, singing, music, and reminiscing about the good old days. It was sometimes hard to tell where the dances ended and the crowd began, but nobody minded - the excellent Twickenham Ales flowed and the star-struck publican laid on some excellent (and free) mulled cider at the end of the evening. Ewell danced Gustav's dance with Eric the musician dancing, and Kevin played - wonderful. The only losers were the car drivers (including John Walsh).

### **Weekend, January 15-17. Morris Ring Jigs Instructional.**

John Walsh attended the Ring Jigs Instructional in Sutton Bonnington near Loughborough. Along with about 35 other men he was intensively drilled in the jigs of seven traditions - Ascott-under-Wychwood, Bampton, Bledington, Fieldtown, Headington, Oddington and Sherborne. Some 25 different jigs in all. Phew! And no, he doesn't remember them all - there are notes. The teaching was provided by Geoff Jerram and Ian Nichols of Winchester MM, Alan Chetwood of Greensleeves and Tony Ashley of Anker MM (who learned his Oddington from Jim Brooks in 1981). The organisation was most impressive, especially the catering provided by a team mostly from Winchester. Being a Ring event there was, of course, a feast on Saturday night complete with a top table accommodating one current and two past Ring squires and the Ring bagman. The dancing was fun though!

**Friday, January 29. The Bagman's Night Out.** Eleven men and eight guests enjoyed a friendly meal at The Wheatsheaf, Esher. The food, wine and service were excellent – by taking orders in advance the Wheatsheaf were able to serve all nineteen of us virtually simultaneously. No speeches, music or dancing, but plenty of lively conversation. Those present were John and Linda Walsh, Jim and Cheryl Barclay, John Petts, Chris and Karen Stokes, Sam Allo and Emma, Mick Jenkins, John Elkins, Fran and Jan Smith, Dick Keen, Annie Stanley, Paul and Meera Winder, Phil Mundy and Lesley.

**Saturday, February 20. The Peacock Centre, Woking** The Woking (Sam Beare) Hospice asked us to dance at their fundraiser at the Peacock Centre, on what turned out to be a drizzly morning. A large TVMM contingent of John Walsh, John Hare, Dick Keen, Paul Winder, Chris Stokes, John Elkins, John Petts, Phil Turner, Mike Vardy, Jim Barclay, Barry Irwin and Julia Jacs entertained a sparse crowd, the hospice helpers and Michael Aspel.

**Saturday, February 20. Kennet Ale.** Yet another happy evening at the scout hall in Bracknell with Kennet MM and their other guests. There were chocolate coated sprouts (weren't there?) pickled onions and other delights before we got on to the meal itself. Plenty of dancing and singing from TVMM with music from Barry, Fran and Jan, and song and dance from Champ, Chris, Dick, John E, John H, John W, Mick J, Mike V, Paul, Phil T, and Sam. There were some particularly fine renditions of Rogers and Hammerstein highlights

from the Elkins/Snowden combo and a mass Lily the Pink from the TVMM choir. Jan and John E. stayed overnight for the cooked breakfast.

**Thursday, February 25. Oatlands Scouts.** A gallant crew of just Fran Smith, John Petts and John Walsh turned up on a cold Thursday evening to show the Morris to the Oatlands Scouts. To their surprise there were 32 Scouts waiting for them! Nothing deterred John W danced a jig as a demo and then launched into teaching them split into four sides of eight. First Constant Billy, Bampton and then Vandals of Hammerwich. The Scouts showed considerable enthusiasm and some aptitude. One of them even took over the teaching of a group to help out. The leadership seemed happy enough and paid us £50 plus £50 for the previous visit we had made two years ago!

John W and Fran retired with hoarse voices and ringing ears to the nearby Alexander for a well-earned pint. Minding their own business they were accosted by two very attractive, friendly (and possibly inebriated) young ladies who expressed fascination with their ... costumes. An unexpected end to the evening. Present: Petts, Smith, Walsh.

**Monday March 28 (Easter Monday).**

**Cobham.** As a late idea, we made a short lunchtime tour near Cobham - first to the Medicine Garden and then to the Plough next door. Despite the close attentions of Storm Katie and a number of fallen trees obstructing various journeys, the power of the Morris held and we managed to dance successfully at both. A small crowd watched the first three dances at the Medicine Garden and then, when a delayed Fran Smith arrived, they all vanished out of the cold wind. The spectators were few at the Plough, but complimentary, and we even had a little weak sunshine. A pleasant opening to the 2016 season. Present: Bull, Irwin, Jenkins, Keen, Mundy, Smith, Stokes, Walsh, Winder



**Saturday April 9. TVMM Ale at All Saints.** After a break of many years we decided to resume our custom of inviting some of our friends to join us in an evening of eating, drinking, dancing and singing. The TVMM catering corps laid on curry (meat or veg), chilli, sausages and a buffet of cheese, pickles and fruit plus wine and Platform 3 beer in the church hall at All Saints, Weston Green. Our guests were Ewell, Fleur de Lys, Rampant Roosters, Spring Grove, a total (including TVMM) of around 55 happy participants.

**Saturday April 16. Oxford Folk Weekend.** A very enjoyable and well supported day out in Oxford alongside - but with almost no contact with - the Oxford Folk weekend. We met in the rain at the Head of the River by the Isis at Folly Bridge. The rain soon stopped so there was dancing in the puddles on the terrace outside for the few hardy souls who stopped and a few less hardy who were hurrying into the pub. Then on to dance on the path just inside Christchurch Meadows - mildly surprised not to be moved on by the bodgers (or whatever they are called) [Ed. Porters if they belonged to Christchurch, Proctors if they belong to the

University.] A constantly changing audience of tourists heading in to the college and cathedral and the meadows. Just to show we could we managed two sets for one dance and did a Valentine with the help of a charming young lady from Spain (I think). There was some demand for food so we headed up to the Kings Arms where some ate very expensive pork pies and we danced on the pavement outside without getting too much in people's way. And then on to our final spot just round the corner in The Broad (Broad Street) outside the White Horse. Stayed there for quite a while and were joined briefly by Phoenix Morris from Rickmansworth with whom we did a joint (and fast for them) Upton. Then back to the Park and Ride and home after an entirely unplanned set of stops. Excellent. Present: Aitken, Allo, Bull, Elkins, Hare, Irwin, Jacs, Jenkins, Kalinowski, Keen, Smith, Stokes, Turner, Walsh, Winder.

**Friday, April 22. St. George's Day Eve with Ewell MM.** Messrs Elkins and Walsh joined Ewell St Mary MM for their annual St. George's Day tour of the City of London one day before the day at the request of Leadenhall Market, who weren't expecting much of an audience on the 23<sup>rd</sup>. Large crowds at The Market and several other locations, despite winds cold enough to worry brass monkeys.

**Saturday, April 23. St George's Day, Thames Ditton.** Danced for the second time at the Thames Ditton Farmers Market - this time because it was St George's Day. A small party danced for about 45 minutes (including a brief pause during an April shower) to an appreciative if changing audience. No beer offered this time! Then moved down to the riverside at the Olde Swan, where we practiced in the open air to an audience of none. Present: Bull, Elkins, Irwin, Jacs, Jenkins, Smith, Stokes, Turner, Walsh.

**Monday, May 2. Riverhouse Barn/The Anglers/Clare House.** The Barn asked us to dance during their May Day celebration, so we did, in a little courtyard where the medium sized audience couldn't escape. The Barn provide sausages in bread rolls and drinks. Then to The Anglers where we danced on the towpath for passing folk who mostly managed to ignore us. This applied also to the bemused bar staff. Finally to Clare House Care Home in Hershaw Road, Walton. We had to ration our dancing time with an accordionist which meant we didn't dance very long. Just as well, because only a few of the inmates managed to stay awake. Present: Bull, Elkins, Jacs, Jenkins, Keen, Mundy, Smith, Stokes, Turner, Walsh, Winder.

**Tuesday, May 10. The Anchor, Brockham, with Rampant Roosters.** When we eventually found the village and the pub we had a merry evening alternating dances with the Roosters. At one point we noticed – how could we not? – that bellringers were practising in the church across the road from the pub and on close examination of the stairs up to the bell chamber the bagman discovered a lady musician from Ewell MM among the ringers. Present: Elkins, Irwin, Jenkins, Keen, Smith, Stokes, Turner, Winder.

**Saturday May 14. University of Roehampton.** The University asked Thames Valley to help celebrate the Investiture of their 136th May Monarch on a beautiful summer's day at Parkstead House. The May Monarch ceremony was apparently started in Whitelands College by John Ruskin. There were uninterrupted views of lawn, trees and Richmond Park. The A3 was there somewhere, but quite invisible and quiet. We danced for the procession of guests and dignitaries on the lawn and later took turns with the jazz band in the courtyard as the guests ate their sumptuous buffet lunch. TVMM tried very hard to finish off the buffet (by invitation) as well as Pimms and wine, but didn't quite manage it. A good time was had by



all, and we were asked to come back next year. The only blot on the day was that the Bishop of Southwark wasn't prepared to give permission to the Bagman to bring TVMM along to dance in Southwark Cathedral. The performers were: Fran, Julia, Allan, Chris, Dick, John E, Mick, Paul and Phil T.

**Tuesday May 17. A Celebration of the life of Malcolm Snowden's wife Frances at Woking Crematorium.** TVMM musicians played Will Ye Go Lassie, Go? during the service and Barry, Dick, Fran, James, John E, John W, Mick, Paul, Phil U – and Champ – danced and played afterwards at the Crematorium and The Cricketers at Horsell. Dave and Cathy Dearsley observed.

**Tuesday May 17. Richmond, The Cricketers and The White Cross, with Spring Grove.**

**Tuesday May 31. The Richard Onslow, Cranleigh.** The Band: Barry, Julia. Dancers: Dick, John E, John H, John W, Mick, Paul, Phil M. A curious evening in damp Surrey. Fleur de Lys had invited us to replace Magog who had not responded to Fleur's invitation, but then turned up. So the three teams danced in a compact courtyard at the back of the pub while rain beat down on the fixed umbrellas under which the musicians and spare dancers hid. A crowded evening in every sense, too many dancers, not enough room to dance. Thames Valley responded by not dancing well.

**Saturday June 4. Thaxted Ring Meeting.**  
**The Band:** Fran, Peter Jones, Brian Heaton.  
**The Dancers:** Chris, Dick, John E, John H, John W, Mick, Phil M, Phil T. We turned up at Thaxted, some on Friday evening, others on Saturday morning and, in the case of an unrecognisable, shaven Mad Bill, on Saturday afternoon. We shared our tour of pretty Essex villages (with unimpressive churches, apart from Finchingfield) with London Pride, Saddleworth and Westminster. There was some cross-dancing between sides



except for Saddleworth, whose style was altogether different, and whose dancing was altogether too good for others to join in. One of the Saddleworth complimented our Bagman, saying at the end of the afternoon that they had enjoyed watching us dance, a compliment indeed. We thought we had performed well, including in our show dance – Cuckoo's Nest Sherborne.

Mick and Sam couldn't track down the key to their billet on Friday, and John E had the same trouble on Saturday. The Hall was called the Centre for the Disabled, appropriately enough because it only opened on Saturday evening when an ambulance delivered a Man of Wight who had fallen over in the street, damaging his face and needing attention. The Old Time Music Trio went home



on Saturday evening as did most others. There were only five for breakfast.

**Tuesday, June 7. The Weir at Molesey with Phoenix Clog.** Alan, Dick, Fran, John H, John W, Julia, Paul, Phil M, Mick, Chris, Champ, Phil T. As ever at the Weir and especially with the dull weather, we danced to ourselves.



**Tuesday, June 14. Plaform3/The Winning Horse, Claygate.** A merry evening with Ewell MM at Claygate's smallest pub (including a double Gustav Dance) with a music session afterwards at The Winner. Alan, Dick, John E, John H, John W, Julia, Paul, Phil M, Chris, Barry, Steve, Phil T.

**Tuesday, June 21. The Castle, Ottershaw.** Alan, Dick, John E, John W, Paul, Fran, John P, Phil M.

**Tuesday June 28. Marneys, Weston Green.** It rained a lot but we got some dancing in, including three volunteers from the audience. Dick, John E, John W, Julia, Fran, Paul, Barry, Chris, Phil T, John P, Alan.

**Saturday/Sunday July 2/3. The Wedding of Tim Keen and Charlie at Wookey Hole Caves.** Although the invitation specified a Steam Punk/Victorian dress code Thames Valley turned up in Morris kit. We assembled on Saturday at The Castle of Comfort, East Harptree for our first taste of cider and a lunchtime session. Then to the Wookey Hole Hotel to check in and dance for the assembling guests, followed by the short walk to and into the caves (past many maturing Cheddar Cheeses), where the wedding actually took place, in a chamber with a low ceiling and an uneven wet slippery floor. We supplied an arch of sticks for the bride, but decided not to dance! After the ceremony we danced outside among large dinosaurs and guests returning to the Hotel before returning by way of the Penny Arcade to a hog roast dinner. After dinner we slipped out to the Wookey Hole Inn, which we revisited on Sunday morning after breakfast for more cider and dancing. We spent lunchtime at The Hunters Lodge, Priddy, a vey unfashionable (no website) pub where we performed for an appreciative audience including a chorus line of mature ladies supplied by the bagman's cousin. Mick Jenkins managed to miss the pub completely and drove on to Shepton Mallett, at which point he decide it was simpler to drive back to London. Present: Alan, Barry, Dick, Fran, John E, John W, Mick, Paul, Phil T, Sam

**Tuesday, July 5. The Saddlers, Send with Fleur de Lys.** Alan, Barry, Chris, Fran, John E, John W, Julia, Paul, Phil T.

**Thursday, July 7. Withington.** The funeral of Collie from The King's Head's at St. Michael's Church, which was crammed with mourners. We danced at the church and at the wake at Chedworth Village Hall (see opposite). This brought to an end Thames Valley's long association with the King's Head, which was now to be sold. Present: Champ, Dave D, Dave C, Dick, Fran, Jan, John E, John W, Mike V, Robin



**Saturday, July 9. Ewell Day of Dance.** TVMM didn't attend because of shortage of numbers.

**Tuesday, July 12. The Three Horeshoes, Laleham.** Another successful evening at one of the Pearmain pubs. Present: Alan, Champ, Chris, Dick, Fran, John E, John W, Julia, Paul, Phil and Phil.

**Saturday, July 16. Claygate Flower Show.** Ewell St.Mary joined us for a successful day, starting with lunch at The Griffin, and ending with a session at Platform 3. In between we danced at the Flower Show, The Hare and Hounds, and The Flower Show again. A highlight was a Tug of War between Ewell and Thames Valley, which TVMM did not win. Present: Alan, Barry, Champ, Chris, Dick, John E, John W, John H, Julia, Mick, Phil x 2.

**Tuesday, July 19. The Parrot, Forest Green.** Alan, Jim B, Barry, Chris, Dick, John E, JohnW, Julia, Mick, Phil T.

**Saturday, July 23. The Fleur de Lys Day of Dance.** Another last-minute cancellation by TVMM.

**Tuesday July 26. The Wheatsheaf, Esher.** Fran, Julia, Chris, Dick, Phil x 2, John E, John W, Mick, Steve, Champ.

**Tuesday, August 2. The Old Plough, Cobham.** Fran, Julia, John E, Dick, Champ, Chris, Mick, Phil M.

**Saturday, August 6. Woking Canal Festival.** Two sets of agricultural dancing from TVMM in full sunshine with a big crowd and everyone happy. Fran, Julia, Champ, Dick, John E, John H, Mick, Mike V, Paul, Phil M, Sam, Steve.

**Tuesday, August 9. The Red Lion, Horsell.** Alan, Champ, Chris, Dick, Fran, John E, John H, Julia, Mick, Mike, Paul, phil and Phil, Steve.

**Tuesday, Aug 16. Thames Court, Shepperton.** TVMM danced on the veranda for an unresponsive sea of diners on the outside tables, which included Peter Davidson (Dr Who) and his large family. Fran revealed that he had been in amateur dramatics with Who many years ago. Whatever happened to Fran?

Alan, Barry, Chris, Dick, Fran, John E, John H, Julia, Mick, Phil and Phil.

**Tuesday, August 23. The Onslow Arms, West Clandon.** A very large crowd outside on a blazing hot day and evening. In reply a thin TVMM squad performed 4-man dances. Fran, John P, Julia, John E, Steve, Alan, Phil M, Phil T.

**August 26-29. The 2016 Cotswolds Weekend** Once again we booked the Withington Village (Jubilee) Hall as our base for internal camping and some campers using the field next door from Friday night onwards. Breakfast and some other meals prepared in the en suite kitchen, once we'd remembered how to make the oven and the hot water work, and some use of The Mill.



Saturday. Our coach collected us on Saturday morning and took us to The Kings Head, Bledington (excellent sunny spot), then The Swan, Swinbrooke. Although there was a good crowd this was a very rushed stop because we hadn't allowed enough time in our schedule. Next the Victoria, Eastleach for a sumptuous buffet lunch. Here we had our first encounter with the weekend's thunderstorms which washed out our planned appearance at the Eastleach Fete although we did dance at the Victoria, which the staff kept dry (just) by blocking the back door with bar towels. Back to Withington for tea and off to The Bathurst Arms, North Cerney for the usual dance on gravel, followed by a certain amount of liquid refreshment back at Withington.

Sunday. Procession from the Village Hall to The Mill, there being no-one in The Kings Head. and dance. Lunch and dancing in the garden at The Plough, Prestbury, Tea at the Village Hall and another thunderstorm in the evening at The Green Dragon, Cowley.





Absolutely astonishing that the cloudbursts which wiped out our appearance at the Eastleach fete and nearly flooded The Victoria at Eastleach on Saturday, and just avoided drenching us on Sunday evening at The Green Dragon, completely missed Withington just a few miles away. Didn't stop the campers moaning about damp tents though - they should have joined the pickled egg-eaters (or should that be pickled-egg eaters?) sleeping on the floor of the village hall.

**Tuesday, September 6. First Autumn practice at All Saints.**

**Saturday September 10, Cobham Heritage Day .** Torrential rain led to a slight change of plan. We were due to dance in Church Street from 11.45 in Church Street and Fran needed to get away promptly so, at the Bagman's request, we were allowed to dance on the altar of St. Andrew's Church to an enthusiastic audience swelled no doubt by the damp conditions outside. Alan, Chris, Dick, Fran, John E, John H, John W, Mick, Paul and Phil T then danced a short session in Church Street before some of us fled the returning rain storm to sample the more welcome liquids in The Plough.

**Saturday, September 17. Yateley Day of Dance.** Alan, Chris, Dick, Fran (from tea time), John E, John H (until tea time), John W, Malcolm and Phil T. enjoyed the usual coach trip and ale, with the help of a trial marriage with Spring Grove involving the exchange of musicians and dancers during the day. We visited Bartons Mill, Basing House, The Coach & Horses Rotherwick, Milestones, and Swallowfield Carnival with teams from Ellington, Spring Grove and Yateley. The feast was fish and chips "from our local chippie around the corner. TVMM did not win the Blindfold Morris competition.

**Friday, September 30 – Sunday, October 2. Forest of Dean tour.** Unfortunately, Edward and Maureen had to cancel this year's weekend in Cinderford because of illness.

**Tuesday, November 20, Thames Valley 2016 AGM**

Notes of the AGM held on November 29, 2016 at All Saints Church Hall, Weston Green

**Present:** J.Walsh (Squire), J.Elkins (Bagman), F.Smith (Treasurer), P.Turner (Ragman), D.Keen (Woodman and Farrier), P.Binns, A.Bull, J.Hare, M.Jenkins, M.Snowden, C.Stokes, S.Tovey.

**Roll of honour:** The Squire read out the names of deceased TVMM members: Jim Brooks, Tony Brown, Robin Cobb, Peter Dashwood, Amnon Derrenberg, Roy Dommett, Ron Duncombe, Hugh Gibson, John Glaister, Siward Glaister, John Hall, Martin Jolly, Alun Jones, Norman Keam, George Lawrence, Dick Mussen, Derek Paynter, Christopher Penton, Ted Perry, Gordon Ralph, Cyril Smith, Gordon Smith, Mervyn Stanley, Mike Sugrue, Phil Sylvester, and Bill Tofts. During the year the side attended the funerals of Coralie Turner, the landlady of the Kings Head at Withington, and Malcolm Snowden's wife, Frances.

**Communications:** Jan Lucas has produced some designs for a new TVMM website. It was agreed to produce a new website, and that Steve, the Webmaster of the present site, should discuss with Jan whether the new website could be accommodated on the present server. Responsibility for maintenance of the new website passes to Jan Lucas - for which great thanks.

**Sticks and Animals:** Dick said that stick stocks were barely adequate for next season. He agreed to look into finding more sticks. The goat and horse were in rude health, despite few outings in 2016. Dick asked for fruit cakes for distribution on Boxing Day. Steve had found the side's set of longswords, in poor condition, in his garage. It was suggested that Colin Messer (Spring Grove) might be interested in having them. The sides rapper swords were currently held by Mick Jenkins and Jon Stanley (Box Hill Bedlam).

**Ragman:** Phil had adequate stocks of kit to meet the foreseeable demand. Sam Allo had stocks of leather badges.

**Accounts:** The club finished the year with £3,745 in the bank, before payment of £640 rent for the hire of All Saint's Hall for Tuesday practices, which has now been paid. This would reduce cash in the bank to £3,105 compared with £2,571 at the end of 2015. Income had been boosted by fees from the Claygate Flower Show and the Roehampton University May Day event. As usual the side had subsidised several events, including the Hire of the All Saints Hall (£218), the Cotswolds Weekend (£195), Thaxted Ring Meeting (£118) and the Bagman's Night Out (160). Full details are in the attached copy of the accounts. It was agreed that annual minimum subs for active and country members should be held at £20/year, but should remain voluntary; active members should continue to pay £3/head on practice nights; membership of the Morris Ring and EFDSS will be continued. A donation of £200 will be made to the Ashford Cameo (Alzheimer's) Day Centre in memory of Mike Sugrue and the Boxing Day collection will be donated to Woking Hospice, topped up to £500 if necessary. Dick agreed to acquire some branded collecting boxes for Boxing Day.

**Bagman:** 2015/2016 had been another very busy season, perhaps too busy – we had withdrawn at the last minute from the Ewell Day of Dance, the Fleur de Lys 40<sup>th</sup> Birthday Day of Dance, and the Kingston Morris Midsummer Evening. The Forest of Dean weekend had also been cancelled because Edward and Maureen were unwell. (A list of completed fixtures is attached). On the positive side, there had been some excellent events in 2016, including Twelfth Night with Ewell at the Willoughby Arms, the revived Bagman's Night Out at the Wheatsheaf, Esher, the also revived TVMM Ale at All Saints church hall with guests from Ewell, Fleur, Rampant Roosters, and Spring Grove, the unique wedding of Tim Keen in Wookey Hole Thaxted Ring Meeting and trips to Oxford, the Cotswolds and the Yateley Day of Dance. We continued our relationship with the Pearmain Pubs (Wheatsheaf, Old Plough, Red Lion, Horsell, Onslow Arms) and with the Platform Three “pop-up pub” in



Claygate. Less happy, but not gloomy events were attending and dancing at the funerals of Coralie Taylor, the landlady of the now sold Kings Head at Withington and Frances, wife of Malcolm Snowden. Autumn and winter practices continued to be regular at All Saints Church hall in Weston Green.

**Squire:** John started by thanking everyone in the club for their support during another enjoyable year and in particular the Bagman for his continued efforts on our behalf. [And in his notes left at home, there were warm thanks to all the musicians for their sterling work in keeping us dancing.] He noted that there had been a very similar level of involvement in events this year (39 of them). 29 members had taken part in one or more events and the average attendance at practice had increased. He particularly mentioned the TVMM Ale, Thaxted Ring Meeting, Wookey Hole and the tug-of-war at the Claygate Flower show as events to remember. He also suggested that the use of a coach on the Saturday of the Cotswolds was a new feature worth retaining. In discussing the standard of dancing, it was accepted that some of the basics of Morris steps and hand movements had become less than precise and John stated that he would spend some time on revision in each practice. He will also, though, continue with the resurrection of lapsed dances from his youth and new dances to supplement those added to the repertoire in the past year (Gustav's Dance, Glaister's Gambol, Tidings). He has already started on Landlord (Adderbury), Bumpus (Ilmington) and Beaux (Badby). There may be more!

**Election of Officers:** The following officers were re-elected by acclamation:

President: Chris Ridley (his job is for life)    Squire: John Walsh    Bagman: John Elkins

Treasurer: Fran Smith    Ragman: Phil Turner    Webmaster: Steve Tovey

Animals and sticks: Dick Keen

Fixtures for 2017: Tuesday night practices will continue weekly at All Saints until May, and then resume in September. Tuesday evening dancing out in 2017 will largely follow the 2016 pattern, including a Bagman's Night Out in January, and an Ale in April. There was the possibility of a weekend trip to northern France, a Ring Meeting, a farewell visit to Twitchen Farm (which is finally nearing sale), and visits to the Forest of Dean or Robin's estate in Acton Beauchamp. A very provisional fixtures list for 2017 is attached.

The meeting closed at about 9.45.

John Elkins, TVMM Bagman, December 8, 2016

**Saturday December 3. Claygate Christmas Lights.** Started at Platform 3. There was hardly a soul about at that stage but dancing commenced regardless (and heedless of the bitter wind). The crowd grew as the light went down. Some confusion ensued about our advertised set in front of the stage as the brass band (Scouts?) had just started nearby so we decamped to an empty spot nearer the station where we danced again for a large crowd. An hour and a half altogether was enough given the cold! Phil Turner supported Fran gallantly with the music. Present: Bull, Hare, Keen, Jenkins, Smith, Snowden, Stokes, Turner, Vardy, Walsh

**Sunday, December 4. Thames Ditton Christmas Fair** After assembling at the Red Lion - where they were offering an interesting (but hugely expensive) rye beer - danced briefly in

the car park before moving up to the High Street where there was a large and appreciative crowd. John Hare had decided to go straight to the other pub and so missed this spot leaving just a bare six dancers! A second spot further up the street had to be danced small because of the press of people (John H had rejoined). Finally, a very short set at the George and Dragon before other engagements took the dancers away. The music was much improved by Fran's use of his amplifier. Phil T was also playing on his melodeon. Present: Bull, Hare, Keen, Jenkins, Smith, Stokes, Turner, Vardy, Walsh

**Monday, December 26. Boxing day.** For the second time we followed our new routine – Platform 3, The Foley, The Hare, The Winner and The Griffin. If anything the crowd at Platform 3 was even bigger than last year. By contrast, numbers (and the welcome from the staff) at the Foley was muted, but there was the usual large crowd at The Hare. We were joined by some musicians and dancers from Kingston Morris and the collection yielded £592.60 plus 5.6 swiss francs.



## 2017 LOG

**Wednesday, January 11. Highway Adults Group, Chessington.** We danced at The King's Centre in Chessington for Paul's church's Highway Group for adults with learning disabilities, and a very appreciative lot they were. We danced for them and got them to dance (most enthusiastically) with us. A great evening all round.

**Friday, January 27. The Bagman's Night Out, The Wheatsheaf, Esher.** Back to the Wheatsheaf for another merry meal, this time in the private room, which was much better than being in the rather noisy general restaurant. This time there seventeen of us enjoyed a good meal, some booze, and a lot of conversation. Present: John Walsh and Linda, John Elkins and Linda, Phi Turner and Lesley, Phil Mundy and Leslie, Dick Keen, Mick Jenkins, Chris Stokes and Karen, Sam Allo and Emma, John Petts, David Payne and Sue.

**Saturday, February 18. The Kennet Ale, Bracknell.** Ten, or was it eleven men joined in the fun with Kennet and other guests at their usual winter ale in the Scout Hut. Present (probably): Dick, Phil and Phil, Champ, John W, Fran, Paul, Mick, Chris, Alan and Sam

**Saturday, April 8. TVMM Ale, All Saints Church Hall, Weston Green.** Another successful Ale at All Saints. This year we were joined by Ewell, Yateley, Spring Grove, Roosters and one man from Kennet: 50 people in all. Catering the same as last year, hot food served through the kitchen hatch, salad, cheese and fruit in the hall along with beer from Platform 3, wine and soft drinks. Plenty of dancing and a good seemed to be had by all.

**Friday, April 21. St.George's Day-ish.** Squire John and Champ joined Ewell MM for their annual St.George's Day do in Leadenhall Market and other pubs in the City - on the day before St.George's Day.

**Saturday, April 22. Oxford Folk Festival.** Yet another repeat performance. We assembled at the Head of the River by Folly Bridge in fine weather and had such a good time dancing for a large audience that we had to be dragged away to dance elsewhere. Elsewhere was inside ChristChurch meadows, where we busked without permission in 2016. Unfortunately the College porters were more active this year and moved us on – because we might be disturbing the students studying for exams! So we moved on to the Bear in Blue Boar Street for a few more dances – and then back to the Head of the River. All in all, satisfying day.



Present: John W, John E, Alan, Paul, Dick, Champ, Chris, Sam, Fran, Julia, Robin and Robin.



**Monday, May 1. Riverhouse Art Centre, Walton.** We danced again for the Riverhouse Mayday event and then, because The Swan didn't want us, for a short spot at The Anglers.

**Saturday, May 13. Spring Grove Ale/Roehampton May Monarch.** Spring Grove celebrated their 40<sup>th</sup> birthday by dancing in Richmond, Twickenham, and Kingston with guests from Ewell St Mary, Greensleeves, Kingston Morris, Yateley, Thames Valley and London Pride. We set off by double decker bus from St John's Church, Kingston at 9.45 and danced with Greensleeves and Kingston at Richmond Green and The White Cross. At this point TVMM left by taxi to dance for Roehampton University at their May Monarch celebration at Whitelands College, where we danced on the lawn and then in the upstairs bar as the guests scoffed their lunch. TVMM tried hard to finish off the buffet (with permission) but had to retire defeated. Then by taxi again to The Barmy Arms, where we rejoined the main party. Back to the double-decker for the journey to The Ram at Kingston, where all danced by the riverside, and by bus again to the Spring Grove, or rather to the Bloomfields street party, the high spot of the day. A short walk to the feast at St John's Church Hall, for eating drinking, singing, but no dancing. You can't have everything, but it was a very successful day.

Present: Fran, Julia, Champ, John E, John W, Dick, Chris, Phil T, (plus Robin A. Alan and Phil M when Spring Grove could spare them).

## **ST VALERY MAY 19/22**

The germ of the idea for this trip to Normandy was John Walsh suggesting that we might visit St.Valery sur Somme in Picardy for a weekend's dancing. The project gradually morphed, after Annie Sugrue had tried without success to interest the local authorities in a visit from TVMM, into a plan to visit St.Valery sur Caux in the Seine Maritime Departement of Normandy. Fran's friend Bob Reeve had a house there and was keen to help organise a visit from TVMM.



After much complicated planning, the main party of 13 travelled by minibus from Jenny Glaister's house in Woodham on the Friday morning, driven by John Walsh and Jan Lucas, and met up with Mike and Jill, and Phil Turner and Lesley who made their own way to St. Valery. The main excitement of the minibus journey was at the start. The bus should have been delivered at 8.45 and a replacement bus eventually arrived at 10.20 after the original bus was involved in an accident on the M25 between the depot in Park Royal and Woodham. We discovered that the windscreen washer smeared opaque liquid over the screen but Jan and John coped.



Because of the delay we arrived in St.V. too late to dance at the local Old Folks home and opted to check in at our hotel in the main square and then head for evening meal in the restaurant across the square. Signs of past and present addiction to calvados began to emerge round about this time.

Our Hotel de la Poste was friendly, basic and cheap.

On Saturday our local contact, Bob's friend Francoise, had arranged for us to dance in Doudeville, the nearby Capitale du lin (flax). We danced at the town hall, in the local market and at the Flax Museum for bemused locals doing their shopping, although the young female helpers in the museum were quite friendly. After a small reception at the town hall laid on by the deputy mayor ("un aperitif normand" or ~~two~~ three, back to St.V, Lunch, dancing in the deserted square, dinner and, in the evening, dancing in the dark outside the Maison Henri IV. Calvados was, again, taken.





Sunday started with another market, at Luneray, where we danced in a street crowded with shoppers after politely declining the dance spot selected by Françoise in a car park. At lunchtime we broke free, and drove to the seaside town of Veules-les-Roses, where we had lunch and busked in front of L'église Saint-Martin (very interesting carvings on the nave columns) and on the seafront. In the evening Françoise had organised an "aperitif" followed by a cold supper at Bob's place, where we danced, gorged and drank Bob's red wine.

We also danced impromptu over the weekend at the Old Folks home and in the town square again, in front of the video display on the police station which, among other things, advertised the presence of "Les Morris Dancers".

Monday was given over to an incident-free drive back to Woodham.

Did I mention the Calvados?

The combatants and camp followers were: Fran and Jan, Jenny G, John and Linda W, John E, Dick, Mike and Jill, Jan and Luciole, Phil M, Phil and Lesley T, Sam and Emma plus Bob, Michelle, Françoise and Michel, who asked us to come back next year.

**Tuesday, May 30. Seven Stars Ripley.** A merry start to the Tuesday night season with Fleur de Lys and Phoenix Clog in the back garden of the Seven Stars. Present: Fran, Julia, Champ, John E, Dick, Chris, Phil and Phil, David, Jim B, John H

**Tuesday, June 6. Richmond.** After a lot of rain, the weather dried up in time for the start of dancing at the Cricketers on Richmond Green. Unfortunately, the wind was still blowing so not very crowd-friendly. Four quick dances for ourselves - five Americans watched the first before heading off to their dinner appointment. Then down to the White Cross for more windy dancing. Pleasant welcome from pub, a few half-interested spectators at the top of the steps into the shelter but still too windy for sitting outside. Not unpleasant but a very Thames Valley sort of evening! Present: Bull, Hare, Keen, Mundy, Smith, Snowden, Stokes, Walsh.



Walsh



**Tuesday, June 13.** To Platform3 in Claygate for the "smallest pub's" second birthday in the company of Ewell St Mary's MM. A typically lively evening with ESM MM, including a couple of joint dances - Gustav's and Vandals. Culminated in setting a new record for the number of people crammed into the pub. We managed 23 of whom 20 were Morris folk (oh, and the goat). The usual very warm welcome from the pub which also meant free beer all evening. Present: Bull, Hare, Jacs, Jenkins, Keen, Mundy, Petts, Snowden, Tovey, Turner,

**Sunday, June 18. The Princess Alice Hospice (and Dog Show) at West End.** on the hottest day of the year so far - just 31degrees. Undaunted we danced tolerably well once Mr Smith had got his fingers warmed up and the sticks had arrived. We'll pass quickly over the first two dances! They were very pleased and grateful to see us and there were even a few watching. Very complimentary comments from a member of Rampant Roosters who was there. Luckily we were on before the Dog show started or there would have been no one! It was warm though. Present: Bull, Hare, Jacs, Jenkins, Keen, Payne, Smith, Snowden, Turner, Walsh.



**Tuesday, June 20. The Castle, Ottershaw.** Against all the odds the scorching, humid weather passed the Castle by, leaving a warm breezy evening. Unfortunately, TVMM, plus Jen, Annie and Hellie easily outnumbered the audience. Never mind. We enjoyed ourselves. Present: Barclay, Bull, Elkins, Hare, Jacs, Jenkins, Keen, Payne, Smith, Turner, Walsh.

**Tuesday, June 27. The Alma (aka Marney's Village Inn), Weston Green.** Now for something completely different. It rained all afternoon and all evening. The duty manager was not authorised to let us dance or play music inside the pub (which was virtually deserted apart from us) so we had a pint or two and went home. What was not different was that this was almost an exact repeat of our last visit to The Alma on **June 28, 2016**, except that on that occasion we got in a few dances between the showers. **Present:** Fran, John P, Julia, John E, Alan, Phil and Phil, David, Champ, Chris, Dick, Mick, David, John H.

**Tuesday, July 4. The Three Horseshoes Laleham.** A routine, slightly substandard evening. **Present:** Fran, John P, Julia, John E, Phil and Phil, David, Champ, Chris, Dick, Mick, David, John H.

**Saturday, July 8. Datchet Day of Dance.** A full day's dancing in Datchet and Windsor. Excellent organisation as usual by Datchet MM. starting with tea, coffee and bacon rolls at the W.I Hall, dancing on the green and a couple on the station platform before the train ride to Windsor and Eton Riverside. Only four sides this year – Datchet, Taepa's Tump, Whitethorn, and Thames Valley - so we all went round together taking turns at Windsor Bridge, Peascod Street, The Guildhall, Windsor Bridge again, the Alexandra Gardens and the Boatman. Lunch at The Waterman's Arms across the bridge in Eton, where TVMM danced again. The one thing Datchet got slightly wrong was temperature control. After lunch the temperature and humidity seemed to ratchet up a few degrees, or was it the effect of the pub lunch and the earlier discovery of the £2.15/pint beers at the Windlesora Wetherspoons? In any case, after the train ride back to Datchet cups of tea at the W.I Hall were extremely welcome, as were the excellent home-made cakes. A final exhausting dance session on the green and home. Fran was the sole TVMM musician and played all day, helped from time to time by a vast orchestra from the other sides. **Present:** Fran, John W, John E, Phil M, David, Chris, Dick, Mick, David, John H.

**Tuesday, July 11. The Wheatsheaf Esher.** You wait for years to get completely rained off (at The Alma) and then it happens twice in a month. For once the weather forecast was

accurate – continuous rain all afternoon and evening, so a large squad enjoyed a free pint and chips inside the pub and then went home. (We arranged to try our luck here again in August.)  
**Present:** Fran, John P, John E, Phil and Phil, David, Chris, Alan, Dick, Mick.

**Saturday, July 15. Claygate Flower Show.** The 65<sup>th</sup> anniversary of TVMM's first public appearance, at the 1952 Flower Show. A few spots of rain as we assembled at The Griffin, for a practice session, but no more after that. Ham and cheese ploughmen for lunch and then a short walk to Blakeden Drive for a couple of dances in the street for an aged neighbour of the Bagman. (This was filmed by a passing neighbour in a succession of still photos which he then joined together to make a speeded up video!) Then on to the main business of the day, dancing between the Tug of War, the fire damaged pavilion and the Pimms and Gin stall. After a sunny session we retired for a rest at the almost deserted Hare and Hounds and more dancing. Back to the Show where we danced a long session in front of the beer tent, more noisy than the earlier session because we were closer to the Fun Fair, but plenty of generally interested spectators. Finally back to the Hare, which had filled up as the Show ran down. Dancing quality had declined but a lively set of dances and a chance to sample the Brightwater Brewery's selection of locally brewed beers. A larger band than usual (Alan, John P, Julia and Phil T) carried us smoothly through the afternoon. **Present:** John P, Julia, John E, Phil and Phil, David, Chris, Alan, Dick, Sam, David.

**Tuesday, July 18. The Old Plough, Stoke d'Abernon.** Rain threatened again at the start but didn't get beyond a light sprinkle. Julia made her solo debut in the first dance, playing Shepherd's Hey for the (only) six dancers who turned up. We switched to 4-man dancing after that with Alan and Phil taking turns with Julia – and then Jim Barclay turned up unexpectedly, giving us two musicians and six dancers. After that a mixture of 4- and 6-man dances with rotating musicians. A small but interested crowd looked on and the rain held off until around 9 o'clock. **Present:** Julia, Jim B, John E, Phil T, David, Alan, Dick, Champ.

**Tuesday, July 25. The Red Lion, Horsell.** A lively evening with just enough dancers, supplemented by a woman dancer from Jolley Hatters Morris, (Tasmania), who just happened to be there, and Cheryl Barclay. **Present:** Fran, Julia, Jim B, John E, Phil T, David, Alan, Dick, Chris.

**Tuesday, August 1. The Onslow Arms, West Clandon.** A good news/bad news evening. TVMM welcomed John Hare back from a "health rest" after the Datchet Day, and Phil M danced once after, or during(?) his health break. We also welcomed Jack Straws who turned up in immaculate kit and dancing immaculately (nearly). The bad news was that unlike last year, when there were dozens of customers eating outside on a hot evening, this year it was a cool evening and the many customers were inside for a French Wine Evening leaving a very select audience for the dancing. **Present:** Fran, Julia, Jim B, John E, Phil T, Mick, David, Chris, Champ, John H, Phil M.

**Tuesday, August 8. The Wheatsheaf, Esher.** This was our second attempt to dance at The Wheatsheaf this year; the first on July 11<sup>th</sup> was rained off. This time, despite an appalling weather forecast up until the day before, the evening was dry and we danced uninterrupted. **Present:** Fran, Julia, John P, John W, John E, Dick, Phil T, David, Champ, Phil M, Steve.

**August 11/13. Twitchen.** This was the Farewell to Twitchen tour organized by Peter Jones, who was selling the property. Dancers and supporters were spread over Twitchen itself, Mike and Jill's house down the road and local B&B.

Friday evening food at Mike and Jill's.

Saturday: The Bagman excelled himself on Saturday morning by discovering that he had forgotten to bring his white trousers and shirt from London, so danced in fawn jeans and a shirt borrowed from Fran, which he donned in a toilet at the first stop, the Exmoor National Park Info Centre (car park), Blackmoor Gate. Then to The Crown Inn, West Down, The Muddiford Inn (lunch stop) and The Old Station House Inn at Blackmoor Gate, which appeared to be a converted railway station – because that's what it was. It may revert to being a railway station if the plans to reinstate the Lynton-Barnstaple railway come to anything. A barbecue at Twitchen in the evening and dancing in the courtyard.

Sunday was excellent. Phil T decided he would stay and Mike seemed to be fully recovered from his tiredness of the night before so we had six dancers. We did a very decent set in front of a small but interested bunch of local spectators - mostly known to the Jones/Vardy clan. Peter said he enjoyed it more than Saturday. The West Barton Gate contingent then went to Lynmouth and walked up river to the National Trust tea shop for cream teas then back to Twitchen for a gin and tonic before a final farewell there. In the evening we went to the Venus for dinner. All very satisfactory. Journey home on Monday very slow but otherwise fine. Champ's bus wouldn't start so he had to call the AA only for it to start first time when the guy tried it! **Present:** Peter, John W, John E, Phil T, Alan, Steve, Champ, Jan, Fran, Dick, Chris, Mick, Mike.

**Postscript from Peter Jones:** Mighty glad that the Twit weekend is declared a success. I can well understand your need to depart promptly on Sunday A.M. and hope that the journey was not too tiresome. As it happened, my expectation of a skimpy half hour at the 'Fox & Goose, Parracombe with everybody getting anxious about the return journey, proved quite to the contrary. We actually had a decent little crowd and had a super time which continued unabated for 2 hours no less. Great fun, following on from the emotional performance in the courtyard the evening before. All in all it was a jolly fine way to draw a line under the Morris connection at Twitchen where we have enjoyed such a wonderful quarter century (nearly). Do please give my warmest thanks to 'the Men' and the 'John's in particular. Young Walsh is a fine leader of men.

**Tuesday, August 15. The Stepping Stones, Westhumble.** Last night with Rampant Roosters was enjoyable and we mostly danced OK. Eight dancers including Chris who seems to be OK though he says he is feeling a bit weak. Champ was only doing hanky dances as his 'morris elbow' was bothering him and Phil M was only doing light work, but is steadily strengthening. Fran and Jim B as music. Roosters were on good form and danced pretty well. They had 8 dancers as well though more music.



**Sunday, August 20. Whiteley Village.** We entertained a tea party on the patio behind Ingram House. A very merry afternoon with, mostly, 4-man dances though James did make the numbers up to 6 for one dance. Somehow we ended up with no sticks so we had to borrow walking aids from the residents to manage a couple of stick dances! **Present:** James, Julia, John W, John E, Phil T, Phil M, Alan.



**Tuesday, August 22. The Crown, St. Margarets,** with Spring Grove Morris. An enjoyable evening with sprinklings of rain early and late. Memorable for a 12-man Adderbury hey which didn't go entirely to plan. **Present:** Fran, John P, Champ, Dick, John W, John E, Phil T, Phil M, Alan, David.

**August Bank Holiday Weekend, Withington.** Another successful weekend based in the Jubilee Hall and the adjoining camping field. Group breakfasts and evening meals were taken in the Hall for a moving target of 20 +/- including an enormous and boisterous Vardy family clan and many other camp followers. A quantity of antique liquor was supplied by the Bagman from his deceased parents' stock and demolished by the participants, including part/whole bottles of Grand Marnier, Benedictine, Cherry Brandy and Cointreau. Much, more up to date alcohol was also given a good seeing to over the weekend.



The Saturday tour encompassed the Keepers Arms, Quenington; the Victoria, Eastleach (for a skimpy buffet lunch); Eastleach Fete (where tea and cakes were offered and consumed); and the Bathgate Arms, North Cerney. A 29-seater coach, which looked as if it might have done service at Dunkirk, picked us up at The Mill and delivered us without incident to



Eastleach, but then developed gearbox trouble. Our driver managed to force the coach noisily into second gear and we lurched off. It rapidly became clear that there was no point heading for Cerney, and we decided to cut our losses and instructed the driver to head back to Withington. In a slow motion version of Speed (a film about a runaway bus) the driver negotiated narrow country lanes with occasional oncoming traffic, T-junctions, hills, villages and major roads all the way back to The Mill, where he parked the dying bus and fled. (Actually Jill gave him a lift back to his depot somewhere near Swindon.) We then decamped into our own vehicles and drove to Cerney.

After all that excitement and an evening meal at the Hall a small party visited The Mill and had a pint or two watching the tumbleweed blowing through the deserted bars. There were

occasional bursts of sound from a small room full to overflowing with an exuberantly dressed hen party but otherwise no customers – on a Bank Holiday Saturday night in the Cotswolds!



The next morning we danced to The Mill and fell in with the hen party again. The bride, who was due to get married in Serbia, performed bravely in TVMM's signature ~~grope~~ Fieldtown Valentine, and we all drove off to the Craven Arms at Brockhampton for lunch dancing and snoozing in the warm afternoon sun.

Last stop of the weekend was at the Green Dragon, Cowley, slightly delayed by Fran losing, then finding his car keys. **Present (at various times over the weekend):** Robin Aitken, Sam Allo, Alan Bull, Tim

Cawdron, David Craig, Dave Dearsley, John Elkins, Mick Jenkins, Robin Kalinowski, Dick Keen, Jan Lucas, Edward Morris, Phil Mundy, Nick Oliver, David Payne, Fran Smith, Malcolm Snowden, Chris Stokes, Steve Tovey, Mike Vardy, John Walsh.

**Tuesday, August 29. The Saddlers, Send.** Yet again Thames Valley were one sandwich short of a picnic, with the dancers only just outnumbering the band. Just five dancers turned up to dance with Fleur who had enough dancers and musicians for two sides. We did manage to assemble a full side for a couple of dances with the help of George, the 16-year old son of one of the Fleur ladies, who dances with them regularly. We rushed to sign him up for TVMM but were told, firmly but politely, that he was already spoken for. He lives in Yateley. **Present:** Fran, Julia, John P, Jim B, John W, John E, Dick, David, Mick.

**Tuesday, September 5. The Parrot, Forest Green.** A damp end to the season, but it didn't actually rain. For a few spectators we danced our way through many traditions, stopping only once in each, or was it twice? We enjoyed a friendly evening of average quality dancing. **Present:** Fran, Julia, John P, Jim B, John W, John E, Dick, David, Mick, Chris, Alan.

**Saturday September 30/Sunday October 1. Robin's Deep Mercia tour.** Robin and Isabel Aitken welcomed a TVMM party to their home in Acton Beauchamp from Friday evening, which began with an evening meal, beer, wine, cider and a late-night cough mixture tasting. For some reason the promised showing of "Cowboys and Aliens" with Daniel Craig didn't happen.

Dancing began on Saturday at The Rose & Lion, Bromyard, followed by The Live & Let Live at Whitbourne and The Unity Brew House at Suckley, where the beers were enthusiastically tested. Two representatives from Faithful City MM joined in the dancing and there was a surprise visit from Stan & Hilary Kilby.

Tea & cakes at Sevington Cottages, were followed by an enthusiastic session in a shoe box-sized room at The Major's Arms, Halmonds Frome (it was raining enthusiastically outside).





The rain continued into Sunday morning and a planned visit to the 12<sup>th</sup> century Acton Beauchamp Parish Church was cancelled despite protests from the Bagman. Wine and brandy from the Frome Valley Vineyard were tasted at Paunton Court, in the presence of American House Guests from the Guggenheim LA, and a young couple from Lourdes on work experience. Then to The Green Dragon at Bishops Frome, (opposite a superb collection of decaying lorries

and fork lift trucks) for dancing lunch and more dancing. **Present:** Robin and Robin, Phil and Phil, John W, John E, Chris, Alan, Mike V, Dave C, Champ, Jan and Nick O.

**Saturday October 8. Oatlands Scouts' Beer Festival.** This was Alan's first outing as the solo musician, playing for about an hour without repeats. The number of punters at the Festival gradually overtook the number of Morris Men between 3.00 and 4.30. **Present:** Alan, John W, John E, Champ, Dick, Mick, David, Phil M, Sam.

### ***THAMES VALLEY MORRIS MEN***

#### ***Notes of the AGM held on November 14, 2017 at All Saints Church Hall, Weston Green***

**Present:** J.Walsh (Squire), J.Elkins (Bagman), F.Smith (Treasurer), P.Turner (Ragman), D.Keen (Woodman and Farrier), A.Bull, J.Hare, M.Jenkins, P.Mundy, J.Petts.

**Roll of honour:** The Squire read out the names of deceased TVMM members: Jim Brooks, Tony Brown, Robin Cobb, Peter Dashwood, Amnon Derrenberg, Roy Dommett, Ron Duncombe, Hugh Gibson, John Glaister, Siward Glaister, John Hall, Martin Jolly, Alun Jones, Norman Keam, George Lawrence, Dick Mussen, Derek Paynter, Christopher Penton, Ted Perry, Gordon Ralph, Christopher Seager-Thomas, Cyril Smith, Gordon Smith, Mervyn Stanley, Mike Sugrue, Phil Sylvester, and Bill Tofts.

*The club has accepted the offer of Chris Seager-Thomas's collection of TVMM photographs and memorabilia and will collect them soon.*

**Communications:** *The new website designed by John Walsh and Jan Lucas is up and running and being maintained by Jan. The Facebook Site has 240 followers.*

**Sticks and Animals:** *Dick said that after donations from Robin Aitken and Peter Jones there were probably enough sticks to last well into next season, although more, preferably ash or hazel, would eventually be needed. Low numbers of dancers had again restricted the opportunities to exercise the goat and horse.*

**Ragman:** *Phil had adequate stocks of kit to meet the foreseeable demand. Sam Allo had stocks of leather badges.*

**Accounts (copy attached):** *The club finished the year with £2,667 in the bank, a reduction of about a £1000 from 2016, caused largely by the delayed payment of £640 to All Saints for the hire of the practice hall in 2016 into 2017. There had also been a decline in fees received,*



members' subs, and bags, although the Boxing Day bag had been a record £600, probably because it was collected on behalf of Woking Hospice. As usual the side had subsidised several events, including the Cotswolds Weekend (£176), the St. Valery weekend (£228) and the Bagman's Night Out (153). Since we started using All Saints for practices costs had been more or less balanced by subs. More details are in the attached copy of the accounts. **It was agreed** that annual minimum subs for active and country members should be held at £20/year, but should remain voluntary; active members should continue to pay £3/head on practice nights; membership of the Morris Ring and EFDSS will be continued; the Boxing Day bag will once again be given to Woking Hospice. Dick agreed to acquire some branded Woking Hospice collecting boxes for Boxing Day.

**Bagman:** Since the 2016 AGM the side had turned out 32 times (including some weekend events). In general Tuesday night sessions had attracted low crowds, but this had been balanced by some very successful weekend events including, the visit to St. Valery, the Farewell Twickenham weekend, the Cotswolds weekend and Robin Aitken's Deep Mercia weekend. The Bagman's Night Out and the TVMM Ale had again been very successful. In 2017 we danced at even more Pearmain Pubs, adding The Crown, St. Margarets to the list, although we had to cry off appearing at the Grantly Arms, as well as at Hampton Court and the Cobham Heritage Day because of the difficulty of assembling enough dancers at the end of the season. Autumn and winter practices continued on Tuesday evenings at All Saints Church hall in Weston Green. (More details are available in the 2016/17 on the TVMM website document archive).

**Squire:** Several members of the side had been absent for large parts of the season because of illness and work commitments and this had made it difficult to improve the standard of dancing over the year. Nevertheless, comments received from spectators suggested that TVMM was continuing to project a happy image. Recruitment of new dancers has continued to be impossible (despite the efforts of David Payne). On the other hand, we now have five or six musicians capable of supporting fixtures on their own or as part of a band.

**Election of Officers:** The following officers were re-elected by acclamation:

**President:** Chris Ridley (his job is for life)    **Squire:** John Walsh    **Bagman:** John Elkins

**Treasurer:** Fran Smith            **Ragman:** Phil Turner            **Webmaster:** Jan Lucas

**Animals and sticks:** Dick Keen

**Fixtures for 2018:** Following a discussion about the attractions and success of dancing mid-week and at weekends **it was agreed:**

1. To continue Tuesday practices until the end of May and restart at the beginning of September.
2. To start Tuesday dance-outs from the end of May and stop at the Cotswolds weekend.
3. To reduce the number of Tuesday dance-outs by, for instance, not dancing on the Tuesday after full weekend events.
4. To dance in 2018 at the Pearmain pubs, The Castle, Thames Court, and Platform 3.
5. To consider occasional Saturday or Sunday lunch time sessions at food pubs.



*In particular we will aim to include the following events next year: the Bagman's Night Out (at The Wheatsheaf), the Kennet Ale, a TVMM Ale, the Oxford Folk Weekend (Saturday), Hastings Jack in the Green (May 4-7), Thaxted or a French trip, the Claygate Flower Show, the Cotswold Weekend (50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary).*

**The meeting closed at about 10.00.**

**John Elkins, TVMM Bagman, November 11, 2017**

**TVMM ANNUAL ACCOUNTS - 29th November 2017**

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>ADMIN</b>			
Membership subs	340.00	Ring/EFDSS membership	139.00
All Saints practice subs	871.90	Hire of Hall	1,960.00
		Website Costs	141.95
		Donation-Woking Hospice	600.00
		Donation-Cameo Day Centre	200.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,211.90</b>		<b>3,040.95</b>
<b>ACTIVITIES</b>			
Oatlands Scouts	100.00		
Claygate Flower Show	250.00	Programme advert and lunches	143.00
Whiteley Village	100.00		
Roehampton University	200.00	Taxi to/from Spring Grove Day	53.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>650.00</b>		<b>196.00</b>
<b>Bags</b>			
Boxing Day	600.00		
Cotswolds Tour	51.86		
Oxford Fold Weekend	58.53		
Three Horseshoes, Laleham	24.01		
The Plough, Stoke d'Abernon	33.13		
The Red Lion, Horsell	27.36		
The Crown St.Margarets	26.62		
<b>TOTAL BAGS</b>	<b>821.51</b>		
<b>Contributions by Men</b>		<b>Payments by TVMM</b>	
Datchet Day of Dance	150.00		150.00
Spring Grove 40th	160.00		170.00
St. Valery Weekend	2431.00		2659.00
Cotswolds	635.00		863.25
Bagmans Night Out	510.00		663.75
Kennet Ale	150.00		170.00
TVMM Ale surplus	116.18		

<b>TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	<b>4152.18</b>	<b>TOTAL PAYMENTS</b>	<b>4676.00</b>
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>6835.59</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>7912.95</b>
<b>Bank Balance B/Fwd</b>	<b>3745.1</b>	<b>Bank Balance C/Fwd</b>	<b>2667.74</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,580.69</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,580.69</b>

**Wednesday November 22. Claygate Beavers.** We were asked to get the Beavers dancing and, despite memories of their teenage colleagues in the Explorers literally running away and hiding when we entered the scout hall on a similar mission a few years ago, that's what we did. They were enthusiastic and very noisy but, unfortunately, far too young to be potential recruits for some years to come. They rewarded us with a box of Waitrose Christmas biscuits. **Present:** Alan, John W, John E, Dick, Mick, David, Phil M, Fran, John P.

**Saturday December 2. Claygate Lights.** We danced at Platform 3 for an hour and then for ten minutes by the stage in The Parade, by which time it was dark enough to hide the (very large) inadequacies in our performance. By that time John Hare had managed to sustain a cut to the face from a broken stick but wore his Elastoplast badge of courage with pride. The lights were switched on by "Claygate Celebrity Paul Wood" aka the owner of the butcher's shop in The Parade. Steve and Linda Tovey watched us dance. Steve, who was too frail to dance, spoke to most of us but sadly he died a few days later. **Present:** Fran, Malcolm, John W, John E, Dick, Alan, Phil M, John H, Sam, David.

**Tuesday December 12. Home of Compassion, Thames Ditton.** John E and John W gave a slide show presentation, with dancing, to some of the residents at this residential care home, some of whom stayed awake.

**Tuesday December 26. The Boxing Day Tour of Claygate.** The schedule was the same as in the last few years: Platform Three, The Foley, The Hare and Hounds, The Winning Horse and The Griffin, starting at 11.30 and finishing at around 3.00. Dry weather and good crowds, particularly at Platform Three, where the large and flat open space and the large, enthusiastic crowd gave us the ideal start to the day. It was good to see Linda Tovey there, a few days after the death of Steve. We collected £550 which was donated to Woking Hospice. **Present:** Fran, Julia, John W, John E, Dick, Alan, Phil M, John H, Sam, David, Tim C, Mick J, Malcolm, Sam.

## 2018 LOG

**Thursday, January 4, The Willoughby Arms, Kingston on Thames.** Another great Twelfth Night (nearly) evening organised by Ewell MM in the large bar at The Willoughby with Cotswold, clog, and border dancing and plenty of enthusiastic singing. Thames Valley provided a small contingent but danced with help from Spring Grove and Ewell. **Present:** John W, John E, Phil M, David, Mick J.

**Friday January 5, Steve Tovey's funeral, Kingston on Thames.** We attended Steve's funeral on a biting cold day in Kingston, and provided a guard of honour inside the chapel. Squire John spoke about Steve's forty years of Morris, at Swansea and Southampton Universities, with Bristol and Hammersmith and, for the last 30 years with Thames Valley, including a two-year stint as Squire. We braved the cold wind to dance Dearest Dicky (the last dance Steve danced with us) and a couple more at the crematorium, then retired to The Foley, where we danced some more in the bar. **Present:** Fran, Julia, John W, John E, Dick, Alan B, Allan G, Phil M, Phil T, John H, Sam, David, Mick J, Malcolm, Sam, Chris, Mike V, James, Paul.

### Steve Tovey - Forty Years in Morris

Steve Tovey was a very loyal friend and a veritable fount of Morris knowledge for Thames Valley Morris over more than 30 years. That depth of knowledge developed during the forty years or more that he was involved with the arcane art of Morris dancing.

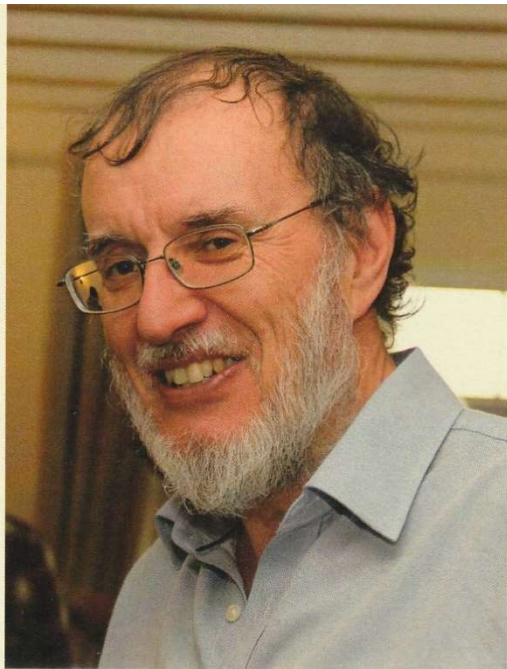
When he went to university in Swansea in the mid-1970s he could already play the fiddle and so he was persuaded - apparently by the opportunities for drinking beer and meeting women - to join the Men of Sweyn's Ey as a musician. With them he started his dancing career as well of course. Their longstanding bagman remembered a day when they were at a Morris Ring meeting - with all the royalty of the Morris world present - and chose to dance a rarely performed dance with Steve playing, only to be told it was to be filmed for the Ring archive - panic! After a quick practice in a quiet corner, they managed it, as Steve would. He celebrated this long association at the Sweyn's Ey 50th anniversary in 2016 and danced with a few of his old 1970's colleagues.

He had a brief turn with King John's Morris Men when he moved to Southampton University for two years in 1976. They didn't really suit him, being a rather conservative club and so he also danced (more to his taste) with the newly formed Red Stags Morris - his foray into the world of Border Morris. He also embarked on teaching Morris to a mixed team - that means including women - highly controversial at that time and it may not have met with general approval among the traditionalists of King John's.

Then in 1978 he moved to London and joined the very well known Hammersmith Morris Men - a very athletic, energetic side with a 'high off the ground' style. This wasn't altogether Steve's natural way of dancing, but he carried on manfully and, as ever, enthusiastically. Linda remembers him setting off on a typical Smiffs project - dancing from London to Brighton (only 50 miles or so) - in a typically Steve sort of way. He had new shoes and insisted they would be fine. He made it as far as Croydon before the blisters overcame him! He also used to avoid their leapfrog dances - too many bruises caused by landing on someone!

He is remembered among the Smiths not only for his sandal wearing, but also for two major feats of organisation: a couple of very successful and memorable canal holidays in the canals around the Midlands and perhaps more importantly persuading Fullers brewery (his employers at the time) that they should 'sponsor' the team. This last gave them a free practice location (in a Fullers pub, of course) and lots of free beer and sausages when they carried out their side of the bargain by dancing at Fullers pubs once a fortnight in the summer. Not too arduous for a hard drinking Morris side.

Life moved on, Steve and Linda started a family and in 1985 decided to move out of town a bit. The choice of location was dictated not only by the trains but also by the needs of the Morris and he settled on Thames Valley Morris Men in Claygate. On a scouting expedition one practice night he recognised a group of relatively aged chaps having a pint after practice and decided they looked as if they would dance in a style much more to his liking than Hammersmith did. And so, after trying out four other clubs, an association of over 30 years was started with the happy feature that he could walk to and, more importantly, home from practice.



What do I remember of Steve with TVMM:

- I always thought of him as one of the small band of 'big blokes' who nonetheless were very light on their feet - an impressive sight.
- His depth of knowledge of the dances and the tunes was extraordinary. He could produce any tune at a moment's notice and was regularly a great help in sorting out the technicalities of any dance. He'd say: "I think you'll find, Mr Walsh, that we always used to do it this way". He liked that slightly mocking formality of "Mr".
- He organised a couple of very enjoyable boat trips for us too, though on a much smaller scale - just day trips into Kingston
- He was quite proud of his time with

Hammersmith and would sometimes watch our more relaxed practice style and would suddenly leap high across the set crying "or we could do it this way like Hammersmith"!

- He produced - entirely on his own initiative - a comprehensive set of documents - using a notation he created himself - defining precisely almost the entire Cotswold repertoire. An extraordinary effort, the output of which is now on the TVMM website and has become a recognised resource for the Morris world.

- Every Boxing Day since 1954 TVMM have danced at all the pubs in Claygate. Steve never missed a single Boxing Day throughout his career - quite a record.

- He was also, of course, elected to the honoured post of Squire of Thames Valley Morris for two years 1997-1999, a period during which the two young Langston boys joined the side and received and appreciated welcoming and considerate support from Steve (as described in a warm tribute from Nicholas received this morning).



- He last danced with us this summer on our annual August Bank holiday tour in the Cotswolds where the style of dancing we follow originated. I well remember calling for 'Dearest Dickie' that day and Steve hurrying forward to join in one of his favourites - weak and tired though he was. We shall be doing that same dance outside after the service.

Mr Tovey will be sorely missed.

**Saturday, February 17. The Kennet MM Ale.** The usual merry evening in the scout hut at Bracknell attended by Fran, Mick, David, Dick, Champ, Chris, Sam, Phil T, Jenny Glaister.

**Friday, March 16. The Bagman's Night Out at The Wheatsheaf, Esher.** Seventeen men and partners enjoyed dinner in the private room, made even more enjoyable by the club paying for the booze. **Present** John and Linda Walsh, John Elkins, Fran and Jan Smith, Phil and Lesley Mundy and Turner, Dick Keen, John Hare, Mick, Chris and Karen Stokes, David and Sue Payne, Jenny Glaister.

**Monday, March 19. Hilda Gibson's funeral, Taunton.** A select Thames Valley side braved the snow to assemble in Taunton for Hilda Gibson's funeral. Fran delivered some memories of Hilda's life written by Brian Heaton, and Digger led the singing of "All around the blooming heather". Thames Valley (John W, John E, Champ, Jan, Dick, Nick Oliver) danced Shepherds' Hey on the altar accompanied by a band including Brian, Fran, Chris Ridley, Peter Jones and Ann Oliver. We danced again at The Stonegallows Inn after the service, where Chris and Janet Ridley sang a little song composed by Hilda. We remembered that we also danced Shepherds' Hey at Hughie's funeral at Taunton in 2004, and also sang "Will You Go Lassie Go" and the Lord of the Dance.

### Memories of Hilda



Self portrait 1960

Hilda Somerfield was born on 12th October 1930 in Newdigate near Dorking in Surrey Her father was a shoe maker and farm worker and her mother was a piano teacher. Hilda showed great artistic promise from an early age and went to the Slade School of Art. It was here that she met the love of her life Hughie Gibson. Hughie came from a Scottish family who were of an upper middle class variety. Hughie and Hilda fell deeply in love and decided to marry. But Hilda's family considered Hughie too posh and Hughie's thought

Hilda to be beneath him. Neither family would agree to the marriage so Hilda and Hughie eloped to Dartington and married. These two talented young folks lived in Devon for some years before moving to Surrey and when I first met them in 1957 they were living in a



Hilda with her home-made pipe organ

caravan in Chertsey. Hilda was a glamorous model, sculptress, artist and musician. They became members of the Thames Valley Morris Men, and Hilda lead the Pyrford Folk Band and was a regular camper with the Order of Woodcraft Chivalry where she played and sang. They moved to Whitton near Twickenham at which time Hilda was a sought-after sculptress making bronze models large and small including the original nodding dog (seen in the backs of cars) and the first jiffy lemon. They longed for the country and moved back to Dartington until 1975 when the cottage they rented was sold and they moved to Somerset buying “Ladywell” close to Stogumber station. Hilda became a care assistant at Sandhill Park Hospital caring for adults with learning difficulties where she stayed for 25 years and was dearly loved by all her charges. When Hughie died Hilda took on a new lease of life becoming a member of the West Country Concertina Players and playing her concertinas in folk clubs and joining the Minehead Art Class. It was here that she met her dear friend Dave who shared her love of music and art and who cared for her so loyally in her declining years. It was Dave who visited her daily and was by her bed in Musgrove Park Hospital playing music when she passed away. We all have our memories of this wonderful, talented, joyous and perhaps eccentric lady – who on camping weekends took her pet cockerel in the back of the van rather than leave it at home. She made a pipe organ out of pieces of wood from the beach which Hughie cut to shape adding extra notes as the wood became available and many other sculptures and paintings. Hilda never stopped singing, playing painting and sculpting to the end.

**Saturday, April 14. Thames Valley Ale, All Saints Parish Hall** Just short of 50 dancers and musicians enjoyed another very successful Ale at All Saints. With our guests from Ewell St.Mary, Kingston, Rampant Roosters, and Yateley we danced, played and sang in a relaxed atmosphere – and demolished most of the curries, chilli, sausages, jacket potatoes, bread and cheese and beer provided by TVMM. An extra surprise for Thames Valley was a guest appearance by Lester Bailey, currently with Aldbury MM. and another by Trump Morris



**Saturday April 21. Oxford Folk Weekend.** Once again – for the fourth year in a row – we danced on the Saturday of the Folk Weekend off piste - we sought out corners of the city where there was little risk of running into other sides, assembling at The Head of the River by the Isis at Folly Bridge where we danced for about an hour and a half in full sunshine. Then we risked dancing in Christchurch Meadows and got away with it this year – we weren’t asked to leave as happened last year, although one of the Christchurch porters kept his eye on us all the while. Flushed with success we gathered outside The Bear and had lunch al fresco – pies from the pie shop in the covered market, (although some brought sandwiches) and beer from the Bear. No dancing at The Bear but plenty in The Broad (Broad Street) outside the Ashmole and the White Horse. Finally back to the Head of the River, before going home. During the day we danced for/with



two or was it three hen parties, and a mixed party of Batmen in full costume who had come all the way from France to celebrate the coming wedding of Robin(?). The Batfolk all joined in a dance which was difficult to describe but great fun. Another great day chatting up the tourists from Sweden, China, Serbia and who knows where else. **Present** John W, John E, Jan, Phil and Phil, Robin K (but not Robin), Sam, Chris, Dick, Alan, supported by Luciole and Kate/Dave/Dawn Sheppard.

**Monday April 23. St George's Day.** Squire John joined and danced with Ewell St.Mary's celebrations starting in Leadenhall Market and ending in a pub in Southwark. In the evening they were joined by John E, Phil and Phil, Alan and David at the Willoughby Arms in Kingston, where there was much dancing in the street and drinking excellent ales provided free of charge by the landlord.

**Saturday May 12. Roehampton University May Monarch.** We were engaged to dance again at this merry occasion but cancelled at the last minute because we didn't have enough dancers. Let's hope it doesn't happen too often this summer.

**May 18-21, St.Valery en Caux.** Everyone turned up on time for the start of our second trip to St. Valery, including the young Polish driver, who delivered a spanking new minibus. Spanking that is apart from several rather noticeable dents and scrapes which he carefully photographed so that we wouldn't be charged for them. Jan and John W were once again our drivers and they safely delivered us to Dover docks in good time for the two-hour delay caused by trouble with the ferries. So we decided to dance in the car park and ended up teaching a party of German students how to do it. They were pretty good too.



No problems on the drive in France and we turned up in time to freshen up in the luxurious Hotel de la Poste, after a not quite acrimonious debate over who should share with who, and then to dinner in the Hotel des Bains, where we met up with Francoise and Michel, our local contacts, and Phil and Lesley and Mike and Jill who had made their own way to France.

Details of the exact flow of events over the next two days are not so easy to recall. A certain amount of Calvados, cidre and wine was downed, and I believe some people even tried drinking what passes for beer in France, but we did drive to le capitale du lin - Doudeville - on Saturday morning, where we found that the flax museum was closed. We busked around the market place until the deputy mayor appeared and asked us in for a couple of drinks. Not wishing to appear rude, we accepted, and renewed our acquaintance from last year.

Back in St Valery we visited Les Camelias (retirement home) and found the inmates glued to replays of the royal wedding that morning, but the staff brutally turned the TV off when we arrived and made the old folk watch us instead. A good time was had by all, and when they



apologised to us for making us miss the wedding we replied that we'd come to France to get away from it.

We dined that evening in the caravan parc-sur-la-Manche courtesy of Phil and Lesley and then drove to the Chapelle Notre Dame des Autels, a recently restored pilgrims' chapel in the countryside near St.Valery. That really was a memorable evening, partly for the dancing but mainly for the location, with locals coming and going through the evening.



Sunday morning was decidedly cold and windy but we danced outside the Hotel by the small Sunday market and then on the promenade facing La Manche, where we also were treated to the dubious pleasure of watching the Kubb tournament. Lunch in St.Valery then off to Veules les Roses where the sun was shining hot and we retraced our steps from last year, dancing on the promenade and in the small square outside the parish church of Saint Martin for large holiday crowds.



Finally, on Sunday evening Michel and his wife Martine invited us to spend the evening in their huge garden where we wound down, ate and drank, danced, and generally enjoyed a relaxing evening.

Monday was straightforward. Goodbyes to Francoise and Michel and the drive home to Woodham with no mishaps.

Somewhere over the weekend – was it late on Saturday or Sunday – a few of us were in our hotel bar with a party of French lady cyclists dancing to Johnny Hallyday and other French favourites on the big screen. We managed to get le patron to play some Petula Clark, Abba, Tom Jones and the Bo Diddlers, but the girls were in charge and reverted to French dance favourites as soon as they could. **Our party was:** John and Linda W, John E, Mick, Dick, Alan, Jan, Malcolm, Mike V and Jill J, Phil and Lesley T, Phil and Lesley M, David and Sue Payne,

**Tuesday May 22. The Grantly Arms, Wonersh.** Fresh from Normandy we joined Fleur de Lys for an evening in the tiny courtyard of this olde worlde pub with a good view of the pretty village with too much traffic. Dick Chaundy turned up for his annual visit but most of the rest of the audience cleared out once we started dancing. **Present** Alan, Champ, Chris, David, Dick, Fran, John E, John W, Mick, Phil and Phil, Sam.

**Tuesday May 29. The Three Horseshoes, Laleham.** We were due to dance with Phoenix Clog but torrential rain intervened and the Bagman, in consultation with Annie from Pearmain pubs, called off the fixture in mid-afternoon, in time to contact all potential attendees (apart from Alan Mead!) successfully.

**Saturday June 2. Princess Alice Hospice /Platform 3, Claygate.** We danced in moderate heat at the hospice garden party to a large audience who largely ignored us. A couple of Gothesses from the folk group joined in with us and would have been very welcome recruits if we were a mixed club. After the fete, to Platform 3 where we sat in the sun and danced occasionally for a crowd which was always fewer in number than we were. The liquorice and blackcurrant porter was very good though. **Present.** Alan, Champ, Chris, David, Dick, Fran, John E, John W, Julia, Mick, Phil M.

**Thursday June 13. Spring Grove Midsummer Dance in Twickenham** A very friendly evening with Spring Grove, Ewell, Yateley, Greensleeves and others. First at The Swan, then at the Barmy Arms as darkness drew in to cover any inadequacies in the dance. **Present.** Alan and Phil M (both in Spring Grove colours), Chris, David, Dick, John E, John W, Mick, Phil T, and musical contributions from the other groups.

**Tuesday June 19. Thames Court, Shepperton.** Once again Thames Valley outnumbered the audience, but it was a cool evening and we had some help with dancing from Ewell Mick, and Terry from Heston Boys/Men, both of whom would make good recruits. Probably not available to us (in any sense) were two Polish women from Weybridge (!) who danced very well after checking with their minder that it was OK to join in with us. **Present.** Alan, Chris, David, Dick, Fran, John E, John W, Julia, Mick, Mike V, and Phil T.

**Sunday June 24. Dick's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday.** We started at the Plough at lunchtime in blazing heat, but had the compensation of being able to watch England putting five goals past Panama before half time. Then on to Dick's garden, where the temperature was even higher. We danced in the garden on and off during the afternoon with an appreciative audience of Dick's family and friends and various TVMM WAGs. Three of Dick's friends from Mayflower MM had journeyed all the way from Billericay with groupies and joined in the dances, as did Dick's grandson Ben who showed great promise. **Present.** Alan, Chris, David, Dick, John E, John W, Julia, Mick, Phil M, and Sam.



**Tuesday June 26. The Red Lion, Horsell.**

Another pleasant visit to the garden behind the pub, with the extra luxury of a television, so that the football fans were able to watch Argentina (unfortunately) scraping through into the next round of the World Cup by just beating Nigeria. The sun had relented enough to make dancing possible and there was a large turn-out from TVMM to welcome, unexpectedly, John Hall (Blob)'s wife Leslie and her son and two daughters, who had come specially to see us

dance. **Present.** Alan, Chris, David, Dick, Fran, John E, John H, John W, Julia, Mick, Phil and Phil, Sam.



**Tuesday July 3. Platform 3, Claygate.** In the company of both Ewell St Mary's and Fleur de Lys, we danced for ourselves at a completely empty Platform 3, since the careful planning had ensured that England were playing for a place in the quarter finals of the World Cup. While both our guest sides managed a full turnout, TVMM only achieved a minimal six dancers (with four musicians) being apparently more football-oriented than others. Nonetheless, a merry evening was enjoyed by all with plenty of dancing and sharing of dancers and musicians. The penalty shootout (victorious for England) was watched by about twenty dancers through the window of the taxi office. Alex appeared to forgive us for forcing him to open on such an evening. **Present:** John W, Alan, Phil and Phil, Dick, David, Fran, John P, Julia, Malcolm O.



**Monday, July 9. The Abinger Hatch.** A long way to drive for not much dancing, because our hosts, Spring Grove had arranged for Kingston, Black Swan, Ewell and Wild Hunt also to be there. But it was a pleasant friendly evening in the country. **Present:** Alan, Dick, John W, Phil and Phil, David, Fran, John E, John H, and Mick.

**Tuesday, July 17. The Royal Oak, Blackbrook.** We were due to dance with Rampant Roosters at their invitation but had to cancel because of a shortage of personnel.

**Saturday, July 14. Ewell Day of Dance/Claygate Flower Show.** Most of us assembled in Claygate for the short drive to Ewell where we gathered with other sides at The Green Man for initial chat, first dances, and a visit to the second hand book section of the nearest charity shop. Then to the Village Fair (more dancing and second hand books), on to the Eight Bells and back to the Wheatsheaf for lunch, a final dance and goodbyes. We then drove back to Claygate for dancing on the field in blistering heat in the afternoon. **Present:** Alan, Chris, John W, Phil and Phil, David, Fran, John E, John H, Julia, Sam and Mick. John W, Phil M and Alan returned to Ewell for the feast.

**Tuesday, July 24. The Old Plough, Cobham.** We revisited the scene of our first contact with Pearmain Pubs on a hot evening with more diners than usual in the garden. **Present:** John W, Phil and Phil, David, Fran, John E, Julia, Mick and Mick from Ewell.

**Saturday, August 4. Mick Jenkins' 70<sup>th</sup>** Not an official TVMM event but several members turned up to Mick's barn dance at All Saints Parish Hall, which was full with eager participants on a hot and steamy evening.

**Tuesday, August 7. The Wheatsheaf, Esher.** A good turn out and enthusiastic dancing while the rain held off, which it did until dancing petered out around 9.00 p.m. **Present:** Fran, Julia, John P, Alan, Phil and Phil, David, John E, Chris Dick Mick and performing guests Mick and Kevin (Kate) from Ewell.

**Tuesday August 14. The Griffin, Claygate.** An extra fixture arranged by Fran Smith. We danced entirely to ourselves having scared off the one party who had been sitting outside until we stood up to begin! A few notable events. We were very pleased to see Kate and Mick Sargent again. Mick danced in his usual enthusiastic style and Kate lent superb support to Fran and Julia. At the end of the evening, Kate asked the Squire if could 'join Thames Valley'

- almost unique as a formal application which was.....accepted with alacrity! Also Fran sought out John Needham (lives in Telegraph Lane in Claygate) to see if he really wished to join us having watched us at the Claygate Flower Show. He danced with John Pell Morris (a short-lived school based group) some thirty years ago. He came along, watched, stumbled through two dances and promised to come to the first practice of the winter. **Present:** Bull, Jacs, Jenkins, Keen, Payne, K Sargent, M Sargent, Smith, Stokes, Turner, Walsh.

**Tuesday August 21. The Croydon Night of Dance.** This was the 15th anniversary of the event, organised by James Denny, who was very keen that TVMM should be present as we were the initiators of the event. A very friendly atmosphere with sides sharing resources - just as well as we had no music and only four dancers for the first hour or so. We helped out Ravensbourne and danced with help from St Albans, Ravensbourne, East Surrey and London Pride. James played for our later efforts. Worth the long journey! Present: Bull, Jenkins, Keen, Mundy, Payne, Walsh plus Denny.

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> August. The Cotswolds Weekend.** We billed this as the 50<sup>th</sup> August Bank Holiday visit to Withington and it may well have been so, but it was definitely our fourth weekend at the Withington Memorial Hall. The advance party arrived on Friday afternoon and dined on a sumptuous meal prepared by Jill Jones and Kate Sheppard – after taking plenty of time to sample the organic beers, and the definitely unorganic stout at The Mill. Dinner was followed by extensive sampling of several curious bottles of curious round-the-world leftover holiday alcohol purchases.



Full English breakfast on Saturday (including some pieces of toast that hadn't been burned) led to the arrival of more performers and supporters and, just after 10.30, the coach and driver. Onward by coach to the Kings Head at Bledington where we were surprised to find Lester Bailey making a rare appearance and yet more reinforcements turned up, including the two Robins (Aitken and Kalinowski). Robin (no the other Robin) danced in here with the Knightwick jig to the tune "The Merry Month of May" played by Robin, who points out that it is a traditional English fiddle tune, usually played as a 6/8 jig.



Then to the Plough at Prestbury for lunch and dancing in their large, pleasant garden. After that to the Brockhampton Show where, unlike the last time we danced here, it did not rain - at all. We performed agriculturally among the hay bales, had tea, raided the book stall and walked on to the Craven Arms for rest and recuperation. More dancing in another pub garden and mass dinner in the evening. Finally back to the Mill where we said goodbye to Paul the driver just after 9.00 p.m. That

wasn't quite the end of the day however as The Mill was still open and there was still plenty of strange liquor waiting in the Hall.

Sunday opened with forecasts of dire weather which came true. Processing to the Mill was cancelled, although Dave Dearsley was observed doing a solo Winster processional just so that he could say that someone had done it. The landlady offered us the back room at the pub and we all squeezed in and danced enthusiastically. The planned visit to The Green Dragon at 1.30 was cancelled because of persistent heavy rain and because there was no prospect of being able to dance at the Bathurst Arms in the evening that was cancelled too. At this point some decided to return home, some went back to the Hall for more Jill/Kate food, some stayed in the pub, a few went for a walk around the leafy lanes of Withington. Kate discovered that the Hall roof was leaking – by being dripped on – and, perversely, it eventually stopped raining, so that we could have danced at The Bathurst after all. Too late. Final full English on Monday morning and off home.

During the weekend we heard that Edward Morris had suffered a stroke and was in hospital at Gloucester.

**Dramatis Personae:** Aitken, Bailey, Bull, Cawdron, Craig, Dearsley, Elkins, Jenkins, Kalinowski, Keen, Lucas, Mundy, Oliver, Payne, Smith, Snowden, Stokes, Vardy, Walsh and many supporters.

**Wednesday, September 12. The funeral of Edward Morris, The Forest of Dean Crematorium.** Thames Valley attended Edward's funeral in force and provided a guard of honour from the hearse to the chapel. Jan Lucas played Lord of the Dance, Fran spoke a tribute, John W read a poem – Remember by Christina Rossetti – and we all danced a couple of Edward's favourite dances (Bumpus and Morning Star) after the service. Most of us then repaired to The Belfry Hotel at Littledean for food, dancing and general merriment until most people gradually drifted off to their homes. A few of Edward's relatives plus John E stayed the night.

**Present:** Alan Bull, Brian Heaton, Malcolm Snowden, Chris Stokes, Dave Dearsley, Dick Keen, Fran Smith, James Denny, Jan Lucas, John Elkins, John Hare, John Walsh, Mick Jenkins, Peter Jones, Phil Turner, Robin Aitken, Robin Kalinowski, Sam Allo – plus Jan Smith, Luciole Brosse, Kate Sheppard, Linda Walsh, Leslie Turner, Isabel Aitken and Magdalena Kalinowski.

John Walsh subsequently compiled:



**The Morris Life of Edward Morris 1939-2018** Edward Morris – how happy was that coincidence of names – came to the Morris late. He joined Thames Valley Morris Men in the early 1990s as an apprentice with no previous experience of any form of dancing. And that started a love affair that continued until his death.

It's probably as well to get this out of the way from the outset: Edward was a dreadful dancer! Enthusiastic, yes. Loyal to the club, absolutely. A delightful 'character', without a doubt. But a dancer, not so much. He slowly mastered the rudiments of rhythmic stepping, at least at the beginning of a session before he got tired (and sometimes emotional) and he had a fine way with improvisatory manoeuvres that usually got him to the right place but not necessarily by the prescribed route. What really mattered, of course, was that he truly loved it and no one in the side would have had it any other way.

Having said all that, he was eventually invited to dance in by Squire Fran Smith and he managed a jig in his own individual style with Fran crouching nearby to offer prompts. He thus became eligible for a waistcoat which he decorated (that is painted) himself in the form of a sailing ship with dancing legs (a novel interpretation of the dancing tree) on which he painted the names of everyone he had danced with (on the waves), all the Squires he had known (on the hull) and other folk associated with TVMM. It is unique and an extraordinary document in itself.

He became an officer of the club when he took on the role of Ragman - responsible for kit - in a rather fruitless attempt to smarten us all up. He was, of course, always immaculately turned out himself. He went on expeditions to Luton in search of hats and commissioned founder member Cyril Smith's daughter Jenny Jones to produce a set of beautifully embroidered waistcoats. He also became involved in the organisation of the celebrations for TVMM's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2002, organising specially designed sweatshirts, glass tankards and badges.

Once he and Maureen had moved away from Surrey to Cinderford, Edward organised an annual tour in the Forest of Dean. The side descended on his small cottage. A privileged few slept in the bedrooms, some in Maureen's studio, some in his camper van, some in tents in the tiny garden, and the residue on the sitting room floor. The pair of them were regularly exhausted by all the preparations for these weekends, but they became a very important part of Edward's year. The planning was always meticulous and the events were extremely well catered, thoroughly enjoyable, well-attended and convivial.

Edward had been an admiral's steward in the Royal Navy and that training remained with him for the rest of his life. He always marched everywhere rather than just walking, had considerable respect for nominal authority and was very keen to 'serve' people whenever there was eating going on. He would fuss about making sure everyone had what they wanted and often not eat himself. The Navy also gave him a fund of stories and a natural kinship with the two other mariners in TVMM: Barry Irwin (also RN) and Dave Dearsley (merchant navy and the source of much friendly rivalry). It was noted when the side visited Kröv on the Mosel, that these three went off to drink together in their own seafarers' bar.

Enthusiastic he certainly was and his enthusiasm tended to get the better of him as he consumed a few lagers – he was unique in TVMM in being a lager drinker. On one twinning trip to Rueil Malmaison he magnanimously invited the entire Russian choir to visit

Elmbridge – an offer that was fortunately not taken up. He might have been influenced by the vodka that the Russians doled out. Was it this that led him to constantly refer to Jill Jones as a Madonna or the lady with the Madonna eyes?

The other big thing in Edward's life was his devotion to his second wife, Maureen. He took enormous care of her always and especially in later years as her health failed. His constant 'fussing' did drive her mad, though.



Other things we remember:

- he always danced in military-looking boots, with a spare pair of wavers tucked into his bell pads and usually no hat (I've no idea what he had against the hat).
- the evening Paul Goddard crashed into him in practice knocking him flying and everyone (apart from Paul) was so upset on his behalf that Paul went home - in Edward's car because they lived close to each other - and never appeared again.
- he frequently asked for his favourite dance – the Morning Star, Fieldtown – especially in latter days when it might be the only dance he did on a tour, strenuous though it is. Bumpus of Stretton, Ilmington was another one. Both were danced by the side at his funeral.
- Edward was fascinated by everything to do with the Templars, the Holy Grail and everything connected with Jewish Apocrypha, and had several books on the subjects which he insisted on lending to John Elkins.

– It has to be said that you didn't have telephone conversations with Edward. The caller made contact, then sat back, preferably with a cup of tea, to hear what Edward had to say.

- He was a very good servicer/repairer of domestic white goods, such as washing machines and dish washers - a service he provided to many of the side. John Elkins can't remember him taking money for his work.

After reading the above Edward's daughter Simone wrote: "How lovely to read this! Also this is an opportunity to ask you to pass on huge thanks to all TVMM who made the Funeral. It took time, planning and expense!! Your dancing was enjoyed by all and I think it's safe to say probably the first time any of us had seen Morris dancing...especially at a funeral!! Dad would have loved it! I feel a bit ashamed as I never really realised how much you all meant to him and the belonging that he felt! It was a brilliant send off so thank you all!!"

**Saturday, September 15. The Onslow Arms, West Clandon.** (Yes, a Pearmain pub).

Another Fran Smith special arrangement for a Saturday lunchtime to round off the season. An excellent TVMM turnout with a number of WAGs in attendance. Danced for a small number of punters in the pleasant walled garden. Then most proceeded to Fran's garden where we sat in the sunshine with a magnificent tea provided by Mrs Smith (plus scones and cream from Mrs Turner). Visits to Fran's railway layout in the loft were a popular feature and elicited much wonder. **Present:** Allo, Bull, Jacs, Jenkins, Keen, Mundy, Payne, Jackson, Smith, Snowden, Stokes, Turner, Walsh.

**THAMES VALLEY MORRIS MEN**

## **Notes of the AGM held on November 14, 2018 at All Saints Church Hall, Weston Green**

**Present:** J.Walsh (Squire), J.Elkins (Bagman), F.Smith (Treasurer), P.Turner (Ragman), D.Keen (Woodman and Farrier), J.Lucas (Webmaster), A.Bull, M.Jenkins, D.Payne, J.Petts. M.Snowden.

**Roll of honour:** The Squire read out the names of deceased TVMM members: Jim Brooks, Tony Brown, Robin Cobb, Peter Dashwood, Annon Derrenberg, Roy Dommett, Ron Duncombe, Hugh Gibson, John Glaister, Siward Glaister, John Hall, Martin Jolly, Alun Jones, Norman Keam, George Lawrence, Dick Mussen, Derek Paynter, Christopher Penton, Ted Perry, Gordon Ralph, Christopher Seager-Thomas, Cyril Smith, Gordon Smith, Mervyn Stanley, Mike Sugrue, Phil Sylvester, and Bill Tofts. During the last year Edward Morris and Steve Tovey had died, as had Hilda Gibson, the wife of Hughie.

**Communications:** Jan noted that the annual charge for using the website seemed rather high and agreed to try to find a lower cost provider.

**Sticks and Animals:** Dick said that the animals had again had few outings in the year. Stocks of sticks were very low but probably enough to see the side past Boxing Day. He urgently needed to find a source of replacement sticks. Fran agreed to contact the Woodland Trust, of which he is a member on behalf of Thames Valley.

**Ragman:** Phil had provided materials for new kit to Robin Kalinowski, who had danced in during the year, and for Kate Jackson who had recently joined as a musician. It was agreed to supply waistcoat materials to Brian Heaton. Stocks of kit were adequate. John Walsh agreed to investigate purchasing a supply of Thames Valley fleeces.

**Accounts:** The club finished the year with £2174 in the bank, a reduction of about £500 from 2017, caused largely by increased costs of hiring the All Saints practice hall and a reduction of income from bags and events. The Boxing Day bag of £550 was again donated to Woking Hospice. As usual the side had subsidised some events, including the Cotswolds Weekend (£198) and the Bagman's Night Out (£221). The St. Valery weekend had however been self-financing. More details are in the attached copy of the accounts. **It was agreed** that annual minimum (and voluntary) subs for active and country members should be held at £20/year; payments by active members for practice nights should be increased from £3 to £5/per session/ per head; membership of the Morris Ring and EFDSS will be continued; the Boxing Day bag will once again be given to Woking Hospice. Since the accounts were closed the concertina left to the club by Chris Seager-Thomas had been sold for £300, which would boost club funds.

**Bagman:** Since the 2017 AGM the side had turned out 14 times on summer midweek evenings, 8 times at short weekend events, at 3 funerals, two long weekends, and 5 miscellaneous events. That this was too many was evidenced by the need to cancel 5 further events which would have provided income of about £300. Summer Tuesday night sessions had again attracted low crowds, but there had been some very successful events, including the return visit to St.Valery, the Cotswolds weekend, the Bagman's Night Out and the TVMM Ale. We danced at five Pearmain Pubs. Autumn and winter 2018/19 practices would continue on Tuesday evenings at All Saints Church hall in Weston Green.

**Squire:** John W. noted the success of the Ale, the Claygate Flower Show/Ewell Day of Dance, the St. Valery weekend and the celebration of Edward's funeral. The Cotswolds weekend had been hit by bad weather on Sunday but was less successful than previous years for other reasons too. Mid-week dancing had however been characterised by poor dancing and low audiences. The standard of dancing continued to decline, except at some of the bigger events, when more experienced dancers attended, and was not good enough to offer for paid hire, or to attend Ring Meetings. On the other hand the music prospects had markedly improved with the help of Malcom Osgood, Kate Jackson, and the increasing repertoires of Alan Bull, Phil Turner and Julia Jacs. TVMM was at least still able to project a happy image. Recruitment of new dancers has continued to be impossible (despite the efforts of David Payne). The Squire thanked John E for all the huge efforts he had put in over umpteen years

**Election of Officers:** John Walsh and John Elkins had decided to stand down after many years as Squire and Bagman. There was no competition for replacements and the following officers were elected by acclamation:

**President:** Chris Ridley (his job is for life) **Squire:** Mick Jenkins **Bagman:** Phil Mundy

**Foreman:** John Walsh **Treasurer:** Fran Smith **Ragman:** Phil Turner

**Webmaster:** Jan Lucas **Animals and sticks:** Dick Keen **Recruitment:** David Payne

In the absence of Phil Mundy on holiday it was agreed that he, Mick Jenkins, John Elkins and John Walsh would discuss the allocation of the various tasks previously carried out by John E and John W. These would include communications with members by email, Facebook, the website etc, and the maintenance of the club photograph, log book and written archives.

A fixtures meeting will be arranged for Tuesday November 20<sup>th</sup>, when a framework for 2019 events will be presented. There was some debate about the arrangements for fixtures in 2019 and the following points seem to have been agreed (sort of);

\*Tuesday practices should continue until some time in May 2019

\*There should be fewer events in total in the summer of 2019

\* "Big" events should be fixed in the schedule first and "everyday" events should be arranged around them.

\* Joint events with other sides should be arranged wherever possible.

\* It would be a good idea to encourage members to organise some events, while keeping the Bagman in touch, and providing reports for the Log

\* Despite David's best efforts in talking to and emailing potential recruits from summer events, no one had yet come forward. Various suggestions were thrown about, including better communication with audiences, offering a Duke of Edinburgh's Award skill, a more professional approach to at least the early part of our dancing out, personal invitations to friends and acquaintances.



The meeting closed at about 10.00. p.m.

John Elkins, TVMM Bagman, October 19, 2018

TVMM ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 16th OCTOBER 2018

	INCOME		EXPENDITURE
<b>Subscriptions</b>		EFDSS Subs	74.00
Annual	330.00 [340]	Ring Subs	65.00
Hall	747.45 [872]	Hall Hire**	1,200.00 [1320]
	<b>£1,077.45</b>	Web Costs	182.24
<b>Fees/Donations</b>			
Claygate Flower Show	250.00	Flower Show	90.50
Steven Archer	50.00 [650]	Woking Hospice	550.15 [800]
	<b>300.00</b>		
<b>Bags</b>			
Boxing Day	550.15		
Claygate Lights	14.73		
Thames Court	9.61		
Wheatsheaf	25.38		
Cotswolds	13.18	Cotswolds subsidy	198.35
Onslow Arms	24.65		
	<b>637.70 [822]</b>		
<b>Events</b>			
Kennet Ale	117.00	Kennet Ale	£117.00
Ale Surplus	73.45	Bagman's night out	221.9
	<b>190.45</b>		
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£2,205.60</b>	<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>2,699.14</b>

<b>Bank Balance</b>		<b>Bank Balance</b>	
<b>B/Fwd</b>	<b>£2,667.74</b>	<b>C/Fwd</b>	<b>2,174.20</b>
	<b>£4,873.34</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,873.34</b>

\*\* Hall Hire excludes payment for Autumn 2018 to Spring 2019

[Numbers in brackets are from the November 2017 Accounts]

**Saturday December 1<sup>st</sup> – Claygate Christmas Lights** It rained on and off all morning but held off all afternoon. We assembled at Platform 3 at 2.00 p.m minus the present and future squires and the new bagman, and easily outnumbered the minimal crowd. Despite unfounded rumours that the spot would only last until 3.30 or 4.00 we danced from about 2.30 through to 4.30 and had a merry Christmas time with a gradually increasing crowd. The outgoing bagman led the first dance, a four-man Vandals, exhibiting some unexpected new moves and some experimental sticking. After that various members of the side demonstrated leadership qualities by taking turns dancing at number one. We mostly danced Christmas carols and responded well to the exclusive supply of Daisy Gold supplied for us by Alex and Sue. **Present:** John E, Sam, Chris, Ewell Mick, Dick, Phil the Doc, Alan, supported by Fran and Kevin.

**Wednesday December 5<sup>th</sup> - Bradbury Centre care home, Woking** At the request of the Anchor Folk Club we joined the Christmas folk afternoon for the residents of the Bradbury Centre. We gathered in the Inn at Maybury first for a quick drink - no dancing as it was cold and wet outside (wusses!) and then proceeded to Smiles Place (yes, really). A small elderly audience some of whom stayed awake and nearly as many from the Anchor club (they did stay awake). The organiser sang a couple of songs then we did four dances including a couple of Christmas numbers. Two of the folk then sang a couple more songs (very well too) before we did two more dances and departed. **Present:** Jackson, Jenkins, Keen, Payne, Petts, Sergeant, Smith, Snowden, Turner, Walsh.

**Tuesday December 25<sup>th</sup> – Claygate Boxing Day Tour** It was a warm day and this may explain the large crowds that turned out to watch us at all five pubs. Platform 3 offered Morris in the round with a large and merry crowd surrounding us as well as watching from the station footbridge. We started on time at 11.30 and set off with just about the same side all day. Phil Mundy our incoming Bagman danced in here with Fran playing Ladies' Pleasure, Fieldtown. After the enthusiastic crowd at Platform 3 the Foley lot were rather more staid but still appreciated John Walsh dancing out as Squire to his own creation, Cuckoo's Nest, Sherborne. On to the usual largest crowd of the day at The Hare where, paradoxically, the performance is more intimate because the dancing space is rather limited these days and the roar of the greasepaint mingles easily with the smell of the crowd, at least the front few rows. Mick Jenkins danced in here as Squire to Highland Mary, Oddington. We were still on schedule as we traipsed round to the Winning Horse for perhaps the most traditional of the

day's five events. An ordinary pub, a small and friendly local crowd surrounding us, and dancing that was still enthusiastic, in our heads if not in our bodies. Finally to The Griffin where, as usual, the wheels began to fall off the wagon as tiredness and the possible effects of the occasional pint had their impact. But we kept going in an agricultural way and had fun while the audience laughed and clapped until about 3.00 p.m. Notable visitors on the day were Phil Underwood, who danced (including the Princess Royal jig from Oddington) and played the fiddle very atmospherically, and Mark and Penny Jones, who followed us round and said hello to several (very) old friends. The music, heavily weighted towards Christmas Carols, came from Fran, Julia, John Petts, Kevin, Phil U and Alan. The dancing was done by John W, Mick J, Phil M, Phil U, John E, Dick, Alan, Champ, Chris and David P. The Bag, which will be donated to the Sam Beare Hospice at Woking, was £543.22. This brings the total we have donated to the hospice over the years to £4743.26.



## 2019 LOG

**Friday, January 11. Feast of St. Hygenus, Bodmin.** [Fran Smith writes]. Peter Jones, Brian Heaton and I stayed overnight with our President Chris Ridley and his wife Janet. The main purpose of the visit was to show support to Chris and Janet, who were very pleased to see us and although Chris has not been that well of late we were made most welcome, wined and dined, and given overnight accommodation. Memories for life and the long journeys made by Peter, Brian and Fran were well rewarded.

Trigg Morris (formerly Trigg Morris Men but now a mixed side) always celebrate the feast of St Hygenus since it is the birthday of the late Christopher Penton (CP), a founder member of Trigg, their first Squire and also a founder member and the first Squire of TVMM. The celebrations were held in the Borough Arms Pub in Bodmin, by Trigg Morris, Tyward Reath Morris, a local mixed side and Peter Jones, Brian Heaton and Fran Smith from TVMM plus our President. It is the tradition at the feast that CP's smoking hat is passed round and the person wearing it has to perform a party piece. Brian, Peter and Fran's contribution was the tune Linden Lea played on a trio of concertinas in memory of Hughie and Hilda Gibson who particularly loved the melody. Our effort was well applauded. The TVMM contingent were made incredibly welcome.

By tradition portions of a very rich and gorgeous cake made in memory of CP by the wife of Peter Marlow were given out. Peter, a Trigg member, worked as a nurse with CP in Bodmin Hospital many years ago and later became his carer. We were all treated to a glass of Rum and Shrub, being CP's favourite tippie. Phil Reece, the Squire of Trigg and formerly of the Ring, Thaxted and Plymouth MM wore a beautifully made replica of CP's waistcoat. This may be the waistcoat which CP wore with TVMM, and therefore made by his wife Nancy, but I am not sure of this. On the Saturday morning Chris, Janet, Peter, Brian, Fran and a local neighbour wassailed the Riddleys' apple trees, to much noise and singing, all in soft Cornish rain!

**Sunday, January 20. The Palladium.** One of the weirder outings for TVMM to the 'Red Carpet Filming' for the new series of Britain's Got Talent. We were herded into a small theatre to await the call for filming to start along with lots of cheerleaders, Tiller-type dancing girls, fairies, unicorns, a stilt walker and a ragbag band of young musicians. Turned out they didn't want Morris dancing, only our costumes, and after waiting for nearly three hours we were all asked to run enthusiastically along the red carpet into the Palladium in pursuit of Ant & Dec. Fame! We did dance a few across the road in Carnaby Street afterwards. They did pay us £50 a head, though. Present: Jenkins, Allo, Bailey (yes, Lester), Keen, Mundy, Jackson, Sergeant, Stokes, Turner, Walsh



**Thursday January 31<sup>st</sup>. Eve of Imbolc at the Willoughby Arms, Kingston.** Ewell staged this event (Imbolc is a traditional Gaelic festival marking the beginning of spring) to replace their usual Twelfth Night evening. It was a fun event of dance and song with Ewell in a mix of kit and fancy dress, Phoenix Clog, the Pielark singers and Thames Valley. We were a bit light on dancers with only Squire Mick, Phil M, Alan, Dick and David dancing, but luckily



we were able to borrow a French Onion Seller (who looked remarkably like Ewell Mick-maybe his twin) to make up the set. Music was provided by a mix of players including Malcolm Osgood. Space was tight but we managed a Black Joke, Lads a Buncham, Spin Doctor, Banks of the Dee and Constant Billy (Oddington), before adjourning for pizzas and sea shanties led by Ewell.

**Friday February 8<sup>th</sup>. The Bagman's Night Out, Esher.** Another now traditional night out of good food (and booze paid for by the side) in the private dining room at The Wheatsheaf. The traditional description extended to the attendees – 16 out of the 18 had been there in 2018! **Present** John and Linda Walsh, John Elkins, Fran and Jan Smith, Phil and Lesley Mundy, Phil and Lesley Turner, Dick Keen, Mick Jenkins, Chris and Karen Stokes, David and Sue Payne, Jenny Glaister, Mick and Kate Sargent.

**Saturday February 16<sup>th</sup>. Kennet Ale** After a couple of last minute dropouts, it was a smaller than planned side that arrived at Bracknell for the event. As usual it was a large gathering of sides, Yateley, Winchester, Victory, Icknield Way, Ripley, Hartley as well as Kennet, so we only did two dances ourselves (Jim Brooks and Tidings), but joined in with many mass dances. After a feast of Chilli and Baked Potato the singing commenced, making all the side somewhat nervous until the Squire stood up and gave an excellent rendition of Liverpool Judies. Hidden talents, Mick? Those present were Mick & Mick, Phil & Phil, Sam and David with music from Fran.

**Saturday April 13<sup>th</sup>. TVMM Ale, All Saints Parish Hall** We held our fourth in the current series of Ales in the practice hall at Weston Green. A very enjoyable evening with the usual mix of show and mass dances, just four songs and TVMM's now-famous selection of dishes for the feast. The following entry from Yateley's Facebook log says it all.

“TVMM were joined by YMM, [Kingston Spring Grove Morris](#), [The Ewell St Mary's Morris Men](#), [Greensleeves Morris Men](#), a Kennet Kontingent and Lester. Some good dancing all round with a great mix of show and mass show dances. Ewell must have been powered by Duracell as they performed tirelessly, their 40th anniversary year this year, apparently being celebrated by filming gurning morris loons wishing them happy birthday.



Rod & Chris in good form as our music, as were all the musicians who, led by the redoubtable [Lester Bailey](#), gave out as much banter as they received! We suspected some musician hi-jinks when Balance the Straw was played allegro x2 followed by Young Collins at a funereal pace...were our bells being pulled?

The cheese board was covered but ‘out’ and was largely scoffed by the time of the feast, the ‘Only

One' noisily chiding some Greensleeves lads for eating all the blue – bang goes an invite to Wimbledon A frisky [The World Famous Yateley Horse](#) appeared and took liberties with the ladies of Kingston who know his tricks of old! "Beer was from the [Brightwater Brewery Platform 3 Claygate](#) – the 'Daisy Gold' and 'Cole Porter' were both very good. Main meal was again great – the rainbow trout was superb as were the four homemade hot choices...and seconds. A few songs allowed opportunities to polish off the Daisy Gold and cheeseboard remnants before more 'looser' dancing. The evening finished with ESMM's Thursday Night in their own style with 'everyone up. A great finish to an exceptionally nice evening. TVMM are always great company and great hosts and tonight was no exception." Present: Jenkins, Bailey, Bull, Keen, Jackson, Mundy, Payne, Sargeant (there with Ewell), Smith, Snowden, Stokes, Turner, Walsh.



**Tuesday April 23<sup>rd</sup> St George's Day.** John Walsh joined Ewell St Mary's for their regular tour of The City - as enjoyable as ever. In the evening a diminished band from Ewell made their way to the Willoughby Arms in Kingston to continue the dance. Joined there by TVMM in numbers for a sociable evening with a small but interested crowd - many local children who enjoyed riding on St George's wooden horse. Rick the landlord had some 20 beers available at the end of his Easter festival, we were photographed with the team collecting for Blind Dogs and we danced two to Ewell's one (seemed only fair after their earlier exertions). Drama was provided by a prat in a golden-coloured car(I think gold signals 'prat') who refused to wait while we were dancing Tidings and drove through the set to raucous boos and insults from the crowd. He only managed a glancing blow on Squire Mick. Perhaps lucky it wasn't a stick dance! Present: Jenkins, Bull, Keen, Mundy, Payne, Sargeant (there with Ewell), Smith, Snowden, Stokes, Turner, Walsh.

**Saturday April 27<sup>th</sup> Staines.** At the suggestion of Phil Turner we danced in ~~Staines-upon-Thames~~ on a cold and windy, but just about dry day. A quick drink at the Wetherspoons George and two dances outside for no one. Then along the High Street with a small audience and on to the Two Rivers shopping precinct where we only managed two dances before the jobsworth security moved us on: 'This is private property and you haven't booked'. Back to High Street for a gently growing audience and then back to the George for a bite of lunch. After that another short session during which Noah, out for his 15th birthday with five friends was persuaded to join us for a version of Constant Billy, Bampton - six of them and six of us. We think he enjoyed it! Phil T and Kate J (who had to leave us at lunchtime) provided the music very successfully. Present: Jenkins, Bull, Keen, Jackson, Mundy, Payne, Sargeant, Stokes, Turner, Walsh

**Tuesday May 7<sup>th</sup>, Three Horseshoes, Laleham with Datchet Border Morris** A good side of eleven met at the Three Horseshoes on a pleasant, though slightly chilly evening. In the absence of the Squire, Dr Phil took on the role of co-ordinating and calling the dances. Paul, our former Fool, showed up to watch, but could not be persuaded to participate. A wide selection of dances were performed by the Datchet men including a Hat dance, while we performed a mix including Oddington, Fieldtown, Bampton, Adderbury and Moulton. With hindsight, 'Stop Me and Buy One' at the end of the session was a risky choice - catching sticks when it is dark is not easy! Present were Alan, Chris, David, Dick, Ewell Mick, Phil the Bag, Dr Phil and Sam with music from Fran, Julia and Kate.

**Saturday May 11<sup>th</sup>, Broadwood Day of Dance, Horsham** The weather forecast was not good and as we arrived at the first stand in West Street together with the hosts, Broadwood Morris, a Step Clog side, the rain started. Fortunately the shower was brief so we were able to start after a few minutes. After a second stand in the Forum, together with two lively Border sides, we progressed across town to the Bandstand, which luckily had a beer tent after two dry stands. We were welcomed by the Broadwood Betsy who was acting as MC for us and an Appalachian side. Lunch followed before our final spot in East Street together with Pennyroyal Clog and (belatedly) Pilgrim. We were intrigued to see Pilgrim perform a new dance they had learnt - the Gaye dance! We did inform them that we devised it. Afterwards, some of us headed back to the Rec Rooms for refreshments provided by our hosts and accompanied by some music. Present were Chris, David, Dick, Squire Mick and Phil the Bag dancing with Alan and Dr Phil providing music as well as dancing.

**Weekend, May 17-19. North Devon Tour.** We started to assemble with Peter Jones, the tour organiser, on Friday evening at The Bell, Chittlehampton, where all three bedrooms were booked for our use, along with the games room floor for indoor campers. Others stayed in more or less local B&Bs and camping vans.

Dancing started on Saturday morning at the Jack Russell in Swimbridge, where we met up with President Ridley and Janet, Exmoor Border Morris (with blue faces) and West Somerset Morris for a lively session within view of St James church with its magnificent font and rood screen. Then to the Stags Head near Filleigh for dancing and lunch, followed by stands in the square at North Molton and outside the covered market in South Molton. The weather was warm and sunny but the crowds were sparse. After a break for refreshment and Manchester City's demolition of Watford in the Cup Final, the last session of the day was in the road outside The Bell and incorporated a traffic diversion around the square to reduce damage to Morris Men. Jan supplied music for the remnants of Exmoor Border, who danced on in lively fashion after their musician decamped. Dinner in the pub, including a fine birthday cake for Phil the Doc baked by Lesley (the cake-maker) and shared with the eager and grateful diners. A music session followed in the dining room, although pressure of space forced some (more or less willing) to adjourn to the bar.



Sunday started with dancing outside St.Hieritha's Church opposite The Bell. (St.Hieritha was said to have been an early convert to Christianity who was "put to death by haymakers' scythes at the instigation of a jealous and probably heathen stepmother".) TVMM danced alone. Then to Morchard Bishop to join up with Winkleigh Morris and Tywardreath, a mixed



side from Cornwall which includes a number of Trigg members, but not at the pub. A somewhat disorganised session because Winkleigh brought the start forward unexpectedly and part of the TVMM squad took a diversion to two interesting village churches at Warkleigh and Satterleigh. Dick's satnav delivered him to somewhere else in the Morchard Bishop postcode area. The net result was that TVMM struggled through with a slowly increasing number of dancers.

The session ended smartly and the dancers dispersed homewards, but a rump repaired to The London Arms for a short, unhurried session in the car park. The TVMM dancing had been suitably agricultural throughout the weekend. The squad ebbed and flowed and included: Chris Ridley, Mick Jenkins, Robin Aitken, John Elkins, Brian Heaton, Peter Jones, Dick Keen, Jan Lucas, Phil Mundy, David Payne, Fran Smith, Malcolm Snowden, Phil Turner, Mike Vardy. (Photographs courtesy of Lesley - not the cake-maker.)



**Monday, May 20. Funeral of Maureen Morris at Cinderford.** Thames Valley reassembled in slightly reduced numbers for Maureen's cremation service, which was almost a replica of Edward's cremation the year before. We danced a couple of dances before the service, escorted the lovely rush coffin into the chapel, danced again after the service and later at the wake at The Belfry. Maureen was born Maureen Heather Johnson-Webb (her father and mother's surnames) and belonged to a large family, many of whom turned up. One of her nephews presented us with Maureen's melodeon (we didn't know she had one) and Jan played it at the crematorium and the Belfry. The squad comprised: Mick Jenkins, Robin Aitken, John Elkins, Brian Heaton, Peter Jones, Robin Kalinowski, Jan Lucas, Fran Smith, Malcolm Snowden, Phil Turner, Mike Vardy. Some photos from the order of service follow.





**Whit Monday May 27, Bampton DOD.** Two musicians and seven dancers travelled to the pretty village of Bampton at the invitation of the Traditional Bampton Morris Men. Some of us went early and followed the three Bampton sides as they danced at the four pubs and various other spots, including some palatial houses and walled gardens, around the village. We were given tea in the garden of the Talbot Inn, and then followed our hosts and the Icknield Way men to the gate of the parish church where we took it in turns to dance. Our hosts danced exclusively Bampton dances, Icknield Way exclusively Stanton Harcourt dances, and we relied heavily on our Oddington repertoire, although we did at one point sneak in a quick Gay Dance, hoping that no-one would notice it was in Bampton style, until Fran unfortunately blew the gaffe! From the church we walked down to the Market Square, and continued our dancing there, and then on to the garden of the aptly named Morris Clown pub. Although the weather forecast promised torrential rain at exactly the time we were due to dance, in fact it stayed dry and indeed fairly sunny. Our hosts were very friendly and welcoming, and a good time was had by all. The squad: Squire Mick, the two Robins, Fran, Chris, Sam, Alan, Malcolm and Phil M.

**Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, Aldbury Morris Men's 50th Anniversary Tour** - Fran, Alan, Chris, Sam, two Phil's, David, Dick and Mick descended on the pretty little Hertfordshire village of Aldbury to help the village's morris side celebrate its 50th anniversary. Baldock Midnight Morris, Hemlock Border Morris, Whitchurch Morris Men, Wicket Brood Border Morris, Whtethorn Morris and a couple of gents from Letchworth Morris were also there. After each side performed a couple of dances in the rain outside the village pub, everyone somehow squeezed on to a single decker coach and were transported to Tring Market Square for more dancing in thankfully improved weather and for the mayor to present Aldbury Morris with a massive birthday cake, which also had to be squeezed onto the coach. The tour then visited the Half Moon pub in Wilstone, the Red Lion in Little Missenden and the Grand Junction Arms in Bulbourne before returning to Aldbury for each side to perform a dance inside the parish church. All then repaired to the village hall to be served with food and drink. When the evening threatened to degenerate into a music and singing session, the Thames Valley contingent said their goodbyes and left.

**Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>, Princess Alice Hospice, Esher.** Only PhilM, Alan, John E, Dick and David were ready to perform at 12.00, so we asked the previous act to sing a couple more songs. Then, after a lengthy introduction from John E, playing for time, we settled into some 4-man dances with Alan playing. We negotiated Shepherd's Hey and Jim Brooks without too many problems and were beginning to feel desperate when Chris, Sam and PhilT turned up and gave us the luxury of being able to do dances for six with PhilT and Alan alternating as dancers.

**Thursday June 20<sup>th</sup>, The Royal Oak, Brockham.** A small contingent from Thames Valley - i.e. 5 dancers plus Fran and Jim Barclay to play - joined a large contingent of Rampant Rooster dancers to dance for an hour or so on a lovely sunny evening in the pretty village of Brockham. Fortunately, the Roosters had a couple of men experienced at Cotswold dances who were available to help out, but we tested them to the limit by asking them to dance e.g. Tidings and Gustav's dance, which they'd never even seen before!

**Tuesday June 25<sup>th</sup>, The Old Plough, Cobham.** Our old friend Brian Heaton turned up to help Fran and Julia out with the music, and together with 7 dancers we had a very enjoyable evening dancing with Phoenix Clog. A paved area of the pub's back garden had been cleared for us, providing an ideal surface for both morris and clog dancing

**Tuesday July 2<sup>nd</sup>, The Castle, Ottershaw.** We've danced here every year for a number of years, not least because the long-standing landlord, John, had made us very welcome. Sadly, he had left during the year, but we were happy to discover that his replacement was just as welcoming. On yet another gloriously sunny evening we had Julia and Kate to play for us plus 9 dancers, including Mick Sargent from Ewell St. Mary's, which was a big help as on this occasion we were not alternating with another side.

**Saturday July 13<sup>th</sup>, Ewell St. Mary's Day of Dance/Claygate Flower Show.** On a hot and sultry day, a team from Thames Valley joined teams from Phoenix Clog, Pilgrim Morris, Kingston Morris and Sedgely Morris to help Ewell St. Mary's Morrismen celebrate their day of dance. Each team did a couple of dances outside the Green Man pub in front of the local mayor, then on to the traditional refreshing of the prisoners in the local lockup, before appearing at the village fete in the grounds of Glyn House. On then to the Wheatsheaf pub for a bit more dancing and lunch after which Thames Valley decamped to Claygate to appear at

the annual Flower Show, where we were pleased to meet up with Julia, who helped Fran out with the music. After a couple of spots at the Flower Show, it was back to Ewell for a bit more dancing outside the Eight Bells pub, followed by the feast in the Church Hall.

**Thursday July 18<sup>th</sup>, Platform 3, Claygate.** Ewell St. Mary's joined us again to dance to a good crowd outside Platform 3. Luckily Ewell arrived in force as we were one dancer short, so were helped out by various others including the bagman's wife Lesley, and Helena from Kingston Morris. All in all, a very enjoyable evening.

**Monday July 29<sup>th</sup>, Marneys Inn, Esher.** A strong side from Kingston Morris joined us for another local fixture - fortunately on this occasion we were able to field a full side, with the invaluable help of Mick Sargent. And things are on the up - a friend of the bagman's called Simon came to watch and expressed the firm intention of joining us in the autumn. It was another lovely sunny and very enjoyable evening.

**Tuesday August 6<sup>th</sup>, Onslow Arms, Clandon.** On another lovely summer evening Dick Keen, Sam Allo, Malcolm Snowden, Phil Turner, Mick Sargent and the squire turned up to dance, and Fran, Julia and Kate turned up to play and enjoy themselves at this very welcoming Permain pub. We were joined somewhat late in the evening by 4 dancers from Fleur-de-Lys who quickly devised some 4-woman dances and then joined us at the end for Bonny Green. The pub garden was full and passing the hat round was quite productive!

**Tuesday August 13<sup>th</sup>, Red Lion, Horsell,** To another welcoming Permain pub. The squire had prepared for a number of 4-man dances, thinking that numbers would be short, but in fact 5 other dancers arrived in the shape of Alan, Chris, Dick, Mick Sargent and Sam, so we were able to dance with a full set. Three young girls were keen to join in, so we taught them Constant Billy Bampton, and also got a number of punters to join in Bonny Green Garters.

**Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> to Monday 26<sup>th</sup> August, The Cotswold Weekend** This was our fifth Cotswold weekend at the Village Hall and the routine is well established – open up the Hall on Friday evening, stock the kitchen with food, make sure that The Mill still serves reasonable beer, set up tents and floor space for outdoor/indoor campers, enjoy a communal meal, play silly games, and start to work out how many members of the Vardy clan will be around for the weekend.

Full Cotswold breakfast on Saturday morning leaving plenty of time to welcome late arrivals, including the coach driver, who wasn't **too** late this year. We left just after 11.00 for the **Daneway Inn** at Sapperton, where we met Lester, danced in the sunshine, lunched and left for Eastleach at about 2.15.

We were just about on time to dance at the **Eastleach fete** at 2.45, where the sunshine had become almost unbearable. Fortunately we stole the space under a ring of tall leafy trees in the middle of the field and danced in shade. But it was still very hot, perhaps too hot for Nick Oliver, who collapsed near the end of our set but was quickly surrounded by medics and recovered enough not to need to go to hospital.

Then to the Victoria Inn at Eastleach and finally to the Bathurst arms at North Cerney at both of which we did our dancing duty. Finally, back to the Village Hall for another merry meal and more silly games.

Sunday is no longer a day for dashing about. Another Full Cotswold breakfast followed by lounging about and the procession from the Village Hall to The Mill where we had a good session on the grass. Lunch at The Mill or the Village Hall, tea at The Hall, a farewell session at The Seven Tuns at 6.00 pm, and back to The Hall for leftovers and a fairly early night.

Monday morning saw a reduced squad finishing off the breakfast goodies, cleaning the Hall and then scarpering by about 10.00.

Who was there? Alan + family, Champ, Chris, Dave Craig + family, Dave D., Dick, Lester (Sunday), Fran, Jan, John e + family, John W, Robin and Robin (Saturday), Mick, Nick and Anne, and were there some Vardys?

**Saturday September 14<sup>th</sup>, Cobham Heritage Day/Woking Palace open day.** Today we had the luxury of 7 dancers - Alan, Chris, David, Dick, Sam, and the bagman and squire. Joining Fran for the music, there was a rare guest appearance by James Denny! We had to follow a wonderful trad jazz band who were playing in Church Street before we started, and then we were asked to do 3 short spots of 3 dances, then 4 dances and 4 dances, with 30-minute breaks in between. After that, on to dance at the site of the interesting Woking Palace, where our short session was followed by a falconry display.

**September 20<sup>th</sup> -23<sup>rd</sup>, Our (now) annual visit to St Valery-en-Caux in Normandy.** The bus party of fourteen assembled at Jenny Glaister's house at 5.30a.m. (yes that's a.m.) on Friday and, with Jan Lucas at the helm, set off for the ferry from Newhaven to Dieppe - a new route with a view to reducing the amount of driving. Unfortunately, John Elkins was forced to drop out at the last minute by an injury to his hand. An uneventful journey brought us to St Valery mid-afternoon and we settled into the Hotel de la Poste once again.

The rest of the afternoon was free before we re-assembled - this time with Phil and Lesley Turner who were travelling independently as usual - for a pre-dinner drink. Our delightful hosts - Francoise and Michel joined us and then we crossed the square to the Hotel Les Bains for the now-regular excellent meal. The evening was enlivened by a frantic phone call for help from Malcolm Snowden (Champ) who had cut his head on the open window in his room. The temporary departure of the first aid team from the table just as the beleaguered waitress was trying to capture orders only added to the already considerable linguistic confusion. Fortunately, the injury was not too serious and we settled back to enjoying ourselves - minus Champ.

Saturday dawned hot and sunny and we drove down to Doudeville to dance in the marketplace to a small crowd. No meeting nor Kir Normand with the deputy mayor this year though. We were just about to leave when a young woman with a toddler begged for us to start again and a few more dances attracted a new crowd.

Back to St Valery for a short set outside the church before repairing to the Hotel for lunch. Then up to the Camelias care home for a well-received set of dances - decently performed too. Cider and cake provided. A small subgroup was then formed to help Michel erect a large marquee ('un barnum' en Francais) in his garden in anticipation for the rain expected next day.



Then, after a break for sleeps, food, whatever, off we went to the lovely medieval pilgrimage chapel at Hautot-l'Auvray. As last year, a very small audience but a beautiful setting and our (quite respectable) efforts were much appreciated. This despite Sam Allo falling over in Vandals and the Squire suddenly calling the Weobley in the middle of the do. We haven't danced that in decades and there was a lot of 'How does that go?' going on with both dancers and musicians. By about the third chorus we had it roughly working!

The meeting of the Calvados Club was made interesting by the patron running out of Calvados (again) and then trying to fob the drinkers off with a strange mixture of other spirits, leading to much discussion as to exactly what they were drinking.

Sunday morning took us to a new venue at Sotteville-sur-Mer. Jan agreed to follow Francoise in her car which was fine until we arrived to find the road she wanted barred. She panicked slightly and we had an interesting tour of the outer reaches of Sotteville before finding our way back to where we were supposed to have been. It turned out that the barricade had been there to protect our dance spot from traffic! Quite a large (by TVMM standards) crowd here for an enjoyable set, followed by a 'reception' in the village hall with cider and cremant and nibbles and the mayor himself. Extremely friendly lot, so another triumph for Francoise's organisation.

Now the forecast rain arrived and cut short our dancing underneath the tourism video display on which we appeared from time to time. Dispersed for a variety of lunch plans and reassembled for a long enjoyable session outside the Hotel de la Poste to finish off the weekend's dancing. It was still hot and sticky and by the end only four men could be found for Idbury Hill. Having said that, the consensus was that we performed as adequately as we are able these days.

The day finished with another delightful evening in Michel and Martine's garden albeit under the very necessary barnum. Michel's generosity is unending and he produced a great quantity of excellent Chablis and Cotes du Rhone to keep us in good spirits. That was enough for most and the calvados club failed to convene - and, anyway, the Hotel was closed by the time we got back.

And so, after another very successful weekend, home we went on Monday - another uneventful journey - back to Jenny's to pick up the cars. Everyone melted away very quickly leaving Dick Keen in the drive emptying all his belongings onto the bonnet of his car trying to locate his car key!

Present: Jenkins, Allo (+1), Bull, Keen, Lucas, Mundy (+1), Payne (+1), Smith, Snowden, Turner (+1), Vardy, Walsh.

### **Minutes of Thames Valley Morris Men Annual General Meeting**

**Held on Tuesday 12 November 2019 at 20.00 in the All Saints Church Hall, Weston Green.**

**Present:** M.Jenkins (Squire), P.Mundy (Bagman), F.Smith (Treasurer), D.Keen (Woodman and Farrier), A.Bull, J.Elkins, M.Sargeant, S.Sanders, and I.Campbell.

**Apologies for absence:** D.Payne, J.Walsh, J.Lucas, T.Cawdron, J.Denny, P.Jones, B.Heaton, K.Jackson, R.Kalinowski

**Roll of Honour:** The Squire read out the names of deceased TVMM members: Jim Brooks, Tony Brown, Robin Cobb, Peter Dashwood, Amnon Derrenberg, Roy Dommett, Ron Duncombe, Hugh Gibson, John Glaister, Siward Glaister, John Hall, Martin Jolly, Alun Jones, Norman Keam, George Lawrence, Edward Morris, Dick Mussen, Derek Paynter, Christopher Penton, Ted Perry, Gordon Ralph, Christopher Seager-Thomas, Cyril Smith, Gordon Smith, Mervyn Stanley, Mike Sugrue, Phil Sylvester, Bill Tofts and Steve Tovey.

During the last year Maureen Morris, the wife of Edward, who had welcomed the side in the Forest of Dean, had died.

**Approval of the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting:** Date should be corrected to read October 16, 2018. Approved.

**Matters arising from the above Minutes:** None.

**Reports:**

**Communications:** No report. Fran Smith mentioned that a lower cost for web services would be sought.

**Sticks & Animals:** Dick Keen advised that we still have a supply of sticks harvested from Woking Palace last year, and that he would collect a new supply in a few weeks' time. The Animals are both currently in good health, but their appearance was increasingly limited due to a shortage of dancers.

**Ragman:** No report

**Recruitment** No report

**Treasurer** It was a good year compared to 2018 resulting in a healthier bank balance of £2935.62. The main difference in income was on the hall subs which meant practice was now self-financing. It was agreed that EDFSS and Ring subscriptions should continue. The bank account signatories will be amended to include Phil Mundy provided that this can be done easily.

**Bagman.** Since the 2018 AGM the side had turned out a total of 26 times, comprising 9 times on summer midweek evenings, 7 times at short weekend events, 3 long weekends, 6 miscellaneous events (Ales, Boxing Day, etc) and at 1 funeral. As planned, this was slightly down on last year's 32 events. A further 3 events were cancelled due to lack of numbers (cf. 5 last year).

This year at most of the Summer Tuesday night sessions we were joined by other sides, which improved the atmosphere. There were successful weekend tours to Devon, St Valery and the Cotswolds, together with some interesting days at the Aldbury DOD and the Bampton Whitsun event, in addition to the more regular events.

Autumn and winter 2019/20 practices continue on Tuesday evenings at All Saints Church hall in Weston Green.

I would like to thank the side for their support in my first year, especially John Elkins who stepped in to organise the Cotswolds and France in my absence. – Phil Mundy

**Squire** I must first of all say that I've really enjoyed my first year as squire, thanks in no small part to the massive amount of help I've been given by a number of people, including John Walsh, who's guided me through a number of dances I'd forgotten, John Elkins who put in a massive amount of work organising the Cotswold and French weekends despite having retired as bagman, and Fran Smith with his fantastic knowledge of morris tunes. We dancers are often rude to our musicians, but this is only jealousy at their talent, so they shouldn't take it to heart, as without them there would be no dancing. Fran's been ably assisted by a number of people this year, including Kate and Julia, Phil Turner and Alan Bull when they've not been dancing, and occasionally Jan Lucas, Brian Heaton. Peter Jones, and James Denny. We dancers are really grateful to them all.

I see that we agreed last year that we'd dance out less in the summer. It certainly doesn't feel as if we've done that. Admittedly we've had fewer weekday evening fixtures (8, down from 14 last year) but this was set against more weekend events (13, as opposed to 10 last year). When clearing out some old papers recently I was interested to come across an old fixture list from 2006. The bagman was a certain Dick Keen, and one big difference from the present time is that it has a postage stamp on it! It lists 24 fixtures for that year, which isn't much different from what we're doing now.

Reading through past AGM minutes, I see that it's customary for the squire to comment on the standard of dancing. I'm not going to do that, as I think the less said about it, the better! The most important thing in my view is that we all enjoy our dancing and communicate that enjoyment to our audience. I think we do that well at the moment.

I started with the crazy notion of trying not to repeat any dances at the same fixture. This may work at weekday evening gigs, but it's not so good at weekends of dance, and has led me to make some mad calls, e.g. dredging my memory and coming up with "The Weobley", a dance no-one had done for years, when we were in France. The trouble with dredging is that you inevitably come up with mud. What I also tried to do, but didn't always remember, was to start each event with the same 6 dances. I'll try and stick to that a bit more carefully in future, and have in mind the following 6 (although I'm open to suggestions): Jim Brooks Oddington, Trunkles Bampton, Spin Doctor Moulton, Banks of the Dee Fieldtown, Constant Billy Sherborne, and Laudanum Bunches Headington. If we get this six off pat at practices before the start of next season, then we stand a chance of starting each fixture looking vaguely professional.

Finally, a big thank you to everyone who's turned out to dance this year. We managed to field full sides at all but two of this year's fixtures, so far as I can recall, and on those occasions members of other sides were around to help us out. - Mick Jenkins

**Election of Officers :** John Walsh has decided to step down as Foreman, and it was agreed that this role would be incorporated into the Squire's role. There was no competition for the remaining officer positions and the incumbents were re-elected by acclamation:

**President:** Chris Ridley (his job is for life) **Squire:** Mick Jenkins **Bagman:** Phil Mundy  
**Treasurer:** Fran Smith **Ragman:** Phil Turner **Webmaster:** Jan Lucas **Animals and sticks:** Dick Keen **Recruitment:** David Payne

**Programme for 2020** This will be similar to last year, Phil M to get views from members on weekend events then circulate proposals.

**Charity (if any) for Boxing Day** Agreed to continue with Woking Hospice

**Any other business**

- a) Agreed Annual Subs to remain at £20
- b) Agreed to give a one-off donation of £300 to Princess Alice Hospice
- c) Winter practice will run from Jan 7<sup>th</sup> to April 28<sup>th</sup>
- d) A motion to wear breeches was defeated

**The Meeting closed at 21:35** allowing time for a few dances with our visitor from Ravensbourne before adjourning to Marneys.

**Phil Mundy, TVMM Bagman, 14 Nov 2019.**

**Saturday November 23<sup>rd</sup>, Friends of Woking Palace.** A select squad performed for the Friends' AGM. John W danced a jig, Dick (and John W) demonstrated the goat and hobby horse, John E did most of the talking in front of a powerpoint presentation on Morris and The Valley history.

**Saturday November 30<sup>th</sup>, Claygate Lights.** It was a cold damp and grey afternoon when we arrived at Platform 3 for an initial 'warm up' dance before the main event. There was no audience at this point and our numbers were limited, so we just did a couple of dances. It was a multicoloured side, with Mick in Ewell Red, Ian in Ravensbourne Black on his first dance with us, plus Alan, Chris, David, Dick, Phil and Sam in traditional Blue and Yellow. Fran and Kate provided the music. We then moved down the road to the 'performance' area where we performed several dances for the fast-growing audience waiting for the big switch on. Simon joined us, though not in kit, to help leaflet the audience to try and get new recruits, and joined into 'Bonnie Greens' at the end. After that a few of us returned to Platform 3 for refreshment.



**Tuesday December 26<sup>th</sup>, Boxing Day** There's a pretty bad weather forecast for today, but we nevertheless gather outside Platform 3 and get in a reasonable session of dancing before the rain starts, the highlight of which was a performance of the Ladies' Pleasure Fieldtown jig by David Payne to dance in to the side. By the time we reached the Foley Arms the rain was lashing down, but we found some shelter under the archway leading from the car park to the



new hotel which Youngs have built in place of our old practice hall. We even managed a few dances there to a somewhat restricted audience. Then, more in hope than expectation, we set off in the rain for the Hare. The weather gods were kind, though, and the rain eased off and allowed us to complete reasonably long sessions at the Hare, Winner and Griffin. The crowds, although obviously much smaller than usual, were extremely generous and allowed us to collect over £400 for Woking Hospice.

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