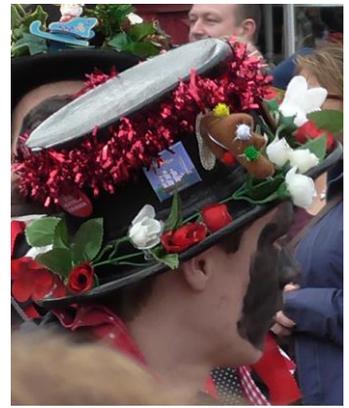


DATCHET BORDER MORRIS

NEWS MAIL: Issue 16, February 2016



The days are getting longer and the number of practice days is getting fewer as we head towards spring. It's the time of year for preparation and tidying things up. But before we get onto new stuff, here's a brief look at the last few months

Sad news – but a fascinating read

In November we heard of the death of Roy Dommett, a man that had been a part of the Morris scene for many years, especially in and around his county of Hampshire. He had been a collector of dances and tunes, a lecturer and instructor. Indeed in the early 1990's Datchet attended two of his workshops in Alton. Having just changed our tradition and style from Cotswold Morris to Border, we were keen to develop a repertoire and these two workshops on the Border tradition gave us an important start. In fact a couple of the dances from those days still sit in our repertoire today. We also knew him as a musician for Fleet Morris, often seeing him on a midweek pub night playing his accordion. His [obituary](#) in the Telegraph therefore came as complete surprise!

The lead up to Christmas

Over recent years we have not missed many Burnham Christmas Carnivals, and 2015 was no exception. Although not very festive, the incredibly mild temperature that night brought out the crowds and even better, the rain kept away until the event had finished. As a result, everybody was in good spirits and up for a good time. Even the band who normally suffer from very cold fingers and have to resort to mulled wine for comfort had nothing to worry about – although they still resorted to the mulled wine just in case!

This first outing therefore got us off to a good start in our festive collection.

The pre-Boxing Day dance out took us to Eton High Street and the George. Once again the weather was fair and the decorations in the High Street were definitely worth seeing. Although the number of people in the streets was surprisingly low considering the number of restaurants and pubs etc. in Windsor and Eton, the George itself was pretty packed inside. Perhaps everybody had already walked to their restaurant or pub before we started at 8.00pm.

Boxing Day



This was probably the warmest Boxing Day dance out ever with daffodils even making an appearance in a couple of places. Once again with unusually warm fingers our musicians belted out a collection of tunes and carols for our dancers to perform to. As well as showing off our new dances for 2015, Ankerwycke and Young Tyler, we also incorporated one of our Roy Dommett dances into the Border part of the Boxing Day programme.

All for one and
one for all!



The Mummers' Play followed, going down with a bit of a bang! The Longsword then completed the proceedings.

Boom
boom!



Thanks to everybody giving generously to our collection buckets, we are now donating £560 to our 2015 Christmas charity - The [Berkshire Autistic Society](#). We are hoping to meet with them soon to present the money.

A particular note of thanks must go to the local news reporter for his comments on our Boxing Day performance. If you've bought a copy of our CD 'Surfing the Scrapbooks' – and we hope that you have, (still available by the way at only £5!) you will know how much we enjoy amusing newspaper reports. What appeared in print was:

'as they performed a Border Morris dance, a sword dance and a traditional Mummers play with their ornate sticks and sandwiches.' (...think he meant 'handkerchiefs'!!)

If only we were making another CD!

Wassail!

As you can't beat a good wassail, we were keen to accept the invitation to help with a wassail in January at the community orchard in at the back of the White Horse in Hedgerley. After a couple of dances at the pub, our band lead a procession of dancers and locals up the hill to the small gathering of young trees that were waiting desperately to be blessed. Unfortunately after a lot of rain this short route turned out to be both muddy and very slippery. Amazingly nobody went face down and the music continued without too much of an issue. We did learn however, that rag coats and hawthorn trees do not get on very well together.

A lovely bonfire and locally-brewed cider made the journey worth the effort and after toasting the trees with gingerbread, cider, gunpowder and wassails we all tramped down again for more dancing and a lively music session in the pub.

By the way, the journey down was even more treacherous as it was starting to get dark – but like the Titanic, the band played on!



The trees are there –
but are very baby!

Forthcoming dates – as far as we know!

Here's the programme as it currently stands. As you can see we are off to Portsmouth again in July and Saddleworth once more in August. We have also invited a newly formed side to join us at the Great Barn in Harmondsworth – [Northfields Morris](#) from Ealing.

Information on tbc's will soon be available and other dates are likely to be added soon. Keep an eye on Facebook or our web site!

Sat 23 rd Apr	St George's Day celebrations at: Dorney Court. SL4 6QP IntoFolk at Datchet WI Hall (see below). SL3 9EH	2.00 – 4.00pm 5.00 – 7.00pm
Sun 1 st May	Welcome the sunrise for the traditional first day of summer! Magna Carta Tea Rooms, Runnymede. TW20 0AE	5.30 am Sunrise
Sun 8 th May	The Great Barn & Village Green, Harmondsworth with Northfields Morris. UB7 0AQ	12.00 - ?pm
Mon 16 th May	The Jolly Gardeners, Old Windsor with Taeppas Tump North West Morris. SL4 2QJ	8.00pm
Sat 11 th June	Harefield Village Fete UB9 6DU - tbc	12.00 - ?pm
Thurs 23 rd June	Midsummer evening on Twickenham riverside with Kingston Morris.	8.00pm
Sat 2 nd July	Datchet Fete at Churchmead School. SL3 9JQ	12.30 – 4.00pm
Sat 16 th July	Victory Morris Men Day of Dance - Portsmouth & Gosport	11.00am – late!
Mon 25 th July	With Jackstraws Morris tbc	8.00pm
Sat 20 th & Sun 21 st August	Saddleworth Rushcart (near Oldham) with Saddleworth Morris Men	

Please see our website / Facebook page to check for any updates www.datchetmorris.org.uk

Other news

If you want to see Morris involved with something a bit different have a look at this youtube video for a new album by a group called [Stealing Sheep](#).

The future!

If you know anybody that could be interested in coming along to a practice, then please put them in touch with us. Needless to say, in this modern world, if we are not careful English traditions will become more diluted and forgotten. We need a steady flow of new recruits to keep us fresh. Remember as well as the Border, we also practice Longsword, Rapper Sword and Mummers – and then there's the music and occasional singing!

We meet on Mondays between 8.00–10.00pm at the Datchet WI Hall on Datchet Green.

Reminder: we are a male-only dance side with male/female musicians (all instruments welcome). Children aged between 12-18 years are also welcome as above, as long as they are accompanied by an adult. There is no charge to come along to try.

IntoFolk – at the Datchet W I Hall

IntoFolk's music sessions have been good fun and very entertaining over the past few months. Christmas is always a popular time for singing and playing and last December was no exception. A chance to play the old favourite folk versions of carols and partake of a bit of Wassailing at least got in some practice before the Morris events. In January, the theme was New Year and Ceilidh tunes and we managed to sing a few New Year songs without resorting to 'Auld Lang Syne'! Our February session became a Valentine's celebration in which much chocolate was consumed in between tunes. We rattled through numbers like 'The Girl I Left

Behind Me', 'I Wanna Be Near You' and several romantic waltzes. Of course, we could not end the evening without a big ukulele rendition of 'Delilah', courtesy of Tom Jones.

All are welcome to join us at our sessions (normally held on the third week of each month) either to play, sing or boost up the percussion with shaky rattly things! It is a chance to practice an instrument or improve your repertoire – sharing tunes and ideas on how to play. Young musicians are welcome with an accompanying adult. See www.intofolk.org.uk for future dates and more information.

Dates and themes for the next sessions are:

Sat 19 th Mar	 Datchet W I Hall SL3 9EH 5.00 – 7.00pm (£3 per participant)	Irish Night
Sat 23 rd Apr		St George Special with Datchet Morris
Sat 21 st May		'Living off the Land'
Sat 18 th Jun		Old Favourites

Photos:

Please continue to send in any photos – even if not used in a News Mail, they are always welcome in our scrapbook.

See you soon!

DATCHET BORDER MORRIS



www.datchetmorris.org.uk



Find us on
Facebook