

*Dr Turberville's Morris*



<http://dr-turbervilles.awardspace.co.uk/>

*Dr. Turberville's  
Morris Dancers.*

*The Scrapbook*

*2010*



## Meet the team

Dave Easeman

Fiona Easeman

Alan Curtis (Moneybag)



Heather Curtis

Len Lewellyn-Sheppard

Barbara Llewellyn-Sheppard



Andrew Knight (Foreman)

Tony Warren

Jo Cooper



Neil Cooper

Angie Johnson

Gemma Hughes (Squire)



Sophie Upham

Grahame Upham

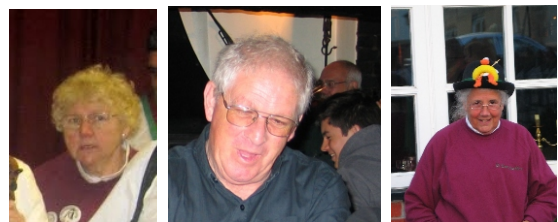
Ken Coles (Bag)



Jan Aldridge

Bryan Aldridge

Janet Whitteridge



Andrew Holder

Julia Stapleton

Alison Bottiglia



Sarah Churchill-Moss







Dr Turberville's Morris - some of them - at Ash during the practice season



## The 2010 Dance Out Programme

The season between AGM's is included in this volume

2009

Oct 4th Apple day / Chuffest at Barrington Court

Oct 17th New Sticks from Bonsley Wood

Oct 31st Hallowe'en

Dec 15th Lion, West Pennard

Dec 18th Christmas Party

2010

April 27th The Ashill Inn, ASHILL with Taunton Deane Morris Men;

May 1st "Sunrise dancing at 5:44 AM" Cadbury Castle, SOUTH CADBURY

May 1st Coppleridge Inn, MOTCOMBE, North Dorset. Handfasting ceremony

May 4th The Bell Inn, ASH with Treacle Eater Clog

May 8th HASELBURY PLUCKNETT Church & School fete.

May 11th Castlebrook Inn, COMPTON DUNDON

May 16th Bath Narrow Boats, CANAL DAY OF DANCE

May 18th The Saxon Arms, STRATTON with Hobo's Morris

May 25th The Greyhound Inn, SYDLING ST NICHOLAS Dance with Festus Derriman

June 1st Fox and Hounds, CHARLTON ADAM

June 5th WEYMOUTH "FOLK FESTIVAL

June 8th The Lamb, Vicarage Street, TINTINHULL

June 12th Church of the Holy Trinity, LONG SUTTON JULIET'S WEDDING

June 15th The Lion, WEST PENNARD

June 19th TRULL, Taunton Trull Village Fete

June 20th TEIGNMOUTH Folk Festival

June 22nd The Royal Oak, OVER STRATTON

June 26th "D'Urberville Hall, Collier's Lane, WOOL"

June 29th The Elms STREET

July 5th Market Square, SOUTH PETHERTON with Sweet Coppin

July 6th Fox and Hounds, CHARLTON ADAM

July 10th COMPTON DUNDON Hog Roast and Village day

July 12th Market Square, SOUTH PETHERTON with Sweet Coppin

July 13th The Arrow YEOVIL

July 17th The Unicorn, SOMERTON Morris Fringe Turbs

July 18th SARUM DAY OF DANCE

July 20th Quarry Inn, KEINTON MANDEVILLE

July 25th Split Rock Wookey Hole Outdoor Activity

July 27th Barton Inn, BARTON ST DAVID

July 31st BATCOMBE, nr Bruton, School Hall Wedding at the School Hall, reception at nearby Barn.

Aug 1st Charmouth Fete

Aug 3rd SIDMOUTH Esplanade

Aug 6th Merriott Social Club, Lower St., MERRIOTT

Aug 10th Eli's (The Rose & Crown), HUISH EPISCOPI

14th Aug East St House, East St, WEST PENNARD anniversary Carden Party - WI.

Aug 17th The White Hart Inn, The Bays, CHEDDAR. "Dancing with Rag Morris

Aug 21st COMPTON DUNDON, Castlebrook Inn and Castle Brook Farm

Aug 24th The Kings Head, Church Street, MERRIOTT

Aug 31st Prince of Wales, HAM HILL

Sept 4th BURNHAM on SEA

Sept 7th The Camelot, SOUTH CADBURY SKITTLES, with BUFFET.

Sept 11th SWANAGE,

Sept 12th "CHEESE FESTIVAL

Sept 14th The Lion, WEST PENNARD Dark Morris

Sept 19th MAFEA Festival

Sept 21st The Bell Inn, ASH AGM.



## October 4th 2009 Barrington Apple day - or was it Chuffest?



4th Oct Barrington Court by Sophie - It was a lovely autumnal day at Barrington Court with Henry the 8th and walking, talking, cuddly hedgehogs. We danced in the great hall, it was very ,Very bouncy! Then we went out into the open air and danced by the lake outside the restaurant ( that lake has many memories!) . I would also like to say Congratulations to Gem the new squire who did a very good job on her first time!

Alan says: Do we get to hear more, even just a hint or two, about those memories?

Sophie says: Lets just say my sister ( whos a very naughty girl) and my poor innocent brother and that lake dont mix! Gem sure copped it from mum

Alan says: Then perhaps it's a good thing that we decided (at the last minute) not to deposit Gem in the lake at the close of her first day's squiring!

Sophie says: Mabye next time (if there is one)....?



## 9th Oct The David Hall - Morris: a life with bells on

We all went to see the film Morris: a life with bells on, at The David Hall in south petherton for the second time (for most of us anyway!). Its a good funny comedy, basically taking the mick out of morris, but good fun! In the interval we did some dancing, which the audience seemed to enjoy. After that we went to the pub, as usual. It was a Great evening!

Sophie says: So when am i going to watch it for the second time, and where!???

Alan says: Next time has to be in a big cinema, with a big screen! The best joke for me was the lowan housewife: You sound just like James Bond!"

Martin says: That may not be for some time. I've just checked Cineworld (Yeovil) and Odeon cinemas (Taunton) and it's not on their current or future film lists yet.

Sophie says: I liked it all and loved the music, and there is actually a cd of all the music that was in the film, which you can buy on amazon!

## Hallowe'en 2009



## Oct 17th - Coppicing for beginners!

Yay, a day in the woods! Following our successful visit in 2006, we went back to Bonsley Wood to join the Dorset Coppice Group on their Open Day and cut ourselves a supply of sticks, which with luck might last the next three years.

We were shown the area to work in and left to our own devices, and we quickly discovered that cutting down trees (well OK, sticks!) requires a sharp saw and a bit of effort. One thing we couldn't decide on is whether we should be cutting at a few inches above ground level, or wherever the stick is the size we need. We did some of each, and hope the group will be able to sort things out to their own satisfaction.

We easily found masses of hazel, although after cutting some 80 sticks when we started sorting through we had to reject quite a few due to defects which, we feared, might cause failure in use (memories of a lump flying off and hitting Wendy on the head at a workshop). We also tried to get a consistent size, but there was some dispute over what that size should be - some want big fat sticks and others prefer smaller ones which might suit a smaller hand better. As a compromise we decided that the Border sticks could be fatter, requiring less finesse in use.

After collecting plenty of hazel we started to look for alternatives. Last time we had an equal mix of hazel and ash but this time the ash proved hard to find. I went on a long forage and found some ash, and some blackthorn, but lost my way dragging it back to base camp - as far as I can tell I

dragged those trees about 2 miles! Then some other people came looking for an ash tree to cut down for the pole lathe demonstration so we left them to do that and went for a late lunch break. When we got back we found that the branches at the top of the tree, which had looked just right for us, had all been taken away and replaced by a lot of bent, twisted stuff which required a huge amount of machete work just to discover that it wouldn't do. So we went off for a wander in the woods, until Drew called us to a patch which was all small ash trees, just what we needed and we ran merrily from tree to tree looking for ones without deer damage or other flaws.

At the end of the day we returned with perhaps a hundred sticks which now require debarking before being dried slowly over the winter. If we all do a few each we'll soon have them ready, and the village hall will be filled with interesting shavings.

Heather says: "A long forage" eh? No wonder it took up most of Saturday! The less finesse bit sounds dangerous to me at least with some of Dr. T's ouch ouch!"

Alan says: "ouch ouch" indeed - What I forgot to mention was that our appointed health - and - safety nominee was the only one to get an injury, and that within about 2 minutes of starting. Was Jo out to get him, or was he distracted by the awesome responsibility of "controlling" a bunch of savages (i.e. everyone except Sophie) let loose in the woods? We probably qualified as proper workmen, since by my calculation we spent more time





drinking tea and eating bacon butties than actually sawing. And we rounded it off with a visit to the pub (of course)."

Sophie says: Mum said Ouch"" when i trapped her hand under the stick she was sawing twice! And dont forget to mention the steam train...things!"

Alan says: OK I retract my earlier statement, Sophie also qualifies as an uncontrollable savage since she even attacks her own Mum!

The pub, as Sophie mentions, was chosen (or chose itself) to host an evening get-together of steam traction engines. I've never heard of this sort of thing before, only ever having been to the large rallies where they stay for a whole weekend or longer; but it was clear that they had only just started arriving (all one had to do was look at the ruts in the field). There were big showmen's engines, road rollers, and smaller utility engines equipped with winches so probably used for ploughing; and a couple of scale models (I'm guessing they were 1/4 scale but I'm not an expert). And an organ.

It certainly made sitting outside enjoying a beer totally different from the normal experience of time spent at pubs, as one after another they came clanking into the car park, swerved around our cars and made their way to the field. That must have been the flattest car park in the county by the end of the evening!

Alan says: Progress update on the sticks:

Andrew claims (but no evidence has been produced) to have already stripped the bark from all the sticks he took home! Actually it was largely done by Jack, who is at a loose end, being on half term.

I claim (and showed the proof) to have done 1 (one) stick (but mine was Ash and they're clearly more difficult!). It took less than 5 minutes, in my hotel room, collecting the strippings on a newspaper (mostly). It certainly is easier done while the bark is still damp; once dry, it requires a lot more force and more frequent re-sharpening of the knife.

So, now what? And are we going to assume these require a whole year to dry before use? And should we sort out the remaining sticks collected 3 years ago and see whether there are any there which we can now prepare for next season, to act as replacements for the ones we've lost this yeAR?

Drew says: Update on Sticks

Jack is indeed on half term and did an admirable job on the sticks. I have all Ash [and one blackthorn one] sticks so I don't know what Alan means!

The whole image of Alan stripping onto newspaper in his hotel room is quite bizarre, and where was he sharpening his knife!!!!?

Salvage is good, recycling is good - I vote for purple sticks. I also think the squire should have maroon sticks to match the hankies, the fool wants multicoloured sticks.

I wonder how we do that?

Alan says: Multicoloured sticks for the Fool! Yay! And a different colour for the Squire - good idea! I don't wish to elaborate further on my activities in the hotel room, especially as Barbara has taken to monitoring me from the window opposite and checking whether I'm properly clean when I get out of the shower! Suffice to say that I don't stand on the newspaper when I'm stripping off, I do that on front of the window as requested.

So who has got the 80+ hazel sticks? Did we leave them behind in the woods by mistake?



Contact from Afar December 22nd, 2009 by Drew

Following is the text of a conversation with Robert De Turberville - well what do ya know!!!!

Rob de Turberville 21 December at 10:20

Hello Andrew,

Just came across the Turberville group site and found your message there about Daubeney Turberville. Thanks! Is the Morris Dance group still going strong?

Best regards

Robert

Andrew Knight 21 December at 10:33

Hi Rob. It certainly is going strong. as a dance team we can field about 15 dancers and have usually between 3 and 6 musicians, and a good fun team they are too! We practice at Ash village hall next to the Bell Inn, Somerset UK at 8.15 Tuesdays if you can join us you'll be made welcome [tomorrow the 22nd and again from 5 Jan]. as for Daubeney - we do have some history and genealogy for him if that is your interest but none of the team are, or ever were, related to him, he is just the most notable person to come from Crewkerne [or Wayford in his case]! so the name was decided.

Happy Christmas

Andrew - current foreman of the team [that means I can shout at them!]

Andrew Knight 21 December at 10:35

Oh Yes, forgot to say - there is a Website at <http://dr-turbervilles.awardspace.co.uk/>

Rob de Turberville 21 December at 11:17

Hi Andrew,

Very good of you to share more info like that. I'll be over for the New Year and if there is any chance of making it to Somerset I'll be sure to let you know. If not on this occasion then I truly hope there will be a chance during 2010.

Very best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Andrew Knight 21 December at 05:09

Thanks! I'll make sure to hassle the web person and ensure the teams location is on the site - so to find out what we've been up to the website is best. We dance out from about 23 April [St Georges day] and are at various locations after that date until late Sept when the practice season begins again and our location is more fixed.

8 Nov - Lodge School by Alan

A really good day up at Purley, teaching our idea of morris to a school group who took a whole day out of their weekend to work with us.

We danced some cracking exhibition stuff, and also a not-so-cracking Siege of Exeter to show them how we enjoy ourselves.

A lot of good work was done; we wish the girls all the best with starting a new side and developing their own style and hope to see them perform at the Somerton Fringe Festival next year! - oh and there was oodles of food, and cake....

Heather says: Yes it was lots of fun and we had many laughs travelling with Neil and Jo, TWO sat navs and following the safety car (altho' we lost it part way thru' the return journey!) Thanks for the good journey and the supply of sweets.

The Girls with Bells says: Thank you all so much for yesterday!! We all had a brilliant time and now just want to get on and dance!!!!!!

We had a positive meeting today and have two new members, Nancy and Annabelle, who attended yesterday just to see what it was like and loved it!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

We all ache all over but it was worth the pain!!!!!!

Thank you all, Hope to see you again!!! We would love that!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Love from the girls x

Alan says: ...and we must thank Neil and Jo for teaching us some new songs, and the two second rule!

Drew says: Glad it went so well and sorry about the lack of Bacon on the outward Journey!! I know about Neils songs - with a miner's light on - but the 2 second rule?

Alan says: Best wishes to all, and in particular to Nancy and Annabelle and hope they continue to enjoy doing English (rather than Irish) dancing...

Ms B says: We now have two more new members and have two full teams!!! All of your enthusiasm and passion for the dance paid off!!! They all want to join in and have some fun!!!! A huge thank you from me!!! And should you ever return to Lodge School to teach, I promise there will be bacon rolls for you all on your arrival!!!! Without fail!!!! Kind Regards!!!! Ms B x

Alan says: Excellent news! And all credit to you, Ms B, and to the girls for their enthusiasm and hard work. As you've all found, it can be a real pleasure to do the morris and I hope you'll be able to find enough time to develop a rich repertoire. We'll be back for those bacon rolls as soon as you call! Alan xx

Alan says: Note for anyone watching: yes we have been back - and the bacon rolls? Well, just read that as acon hot cross buns"!!!!!! Deeeelicious!"

Heather says: And now Ms B has joined Dr. T's for a couple of dance outs, huzzah!!

Heather Curtis has had a brilliant day dancing, eating, drinking and having lots of laughs with Dr. Turbervilles and The Girls with Bells!

Alan Curtis Likewise - and many thanks to Ali B for making us so welcome (i.e. for feeding us 3 times in 5 hours)! But boo to the M25 and traffic on the way home.

07 March 2010 at 22:18 · Like

Barbara J Llewellyn-Sheppard but yum to the hot x bun with bacon!



## Dec 15th - At the Lion in West Pennard



## Dec 18th - Foreman's Party



Christmas by Alan

A quick update: Christmas party hosted by Andrew and Sue, great fun, many thanks!  
Good to see everyone dressed up in their posh party gear as well!

Last practice before Christmas was on the 22nd, shorter practice than usual (came close to being completely abandoned as we couldn't get in to the hall) followed by food at the pub - what a great idea, well done Ken, good to see Dave, Fiona and Catherine, can we do this every week?

Next practice will be next year (!!!) on 5 Jan, not sure that I can wait that long! Will I have forgotten everything we learned in 2009? Will we forget Jed's Jenny Lind?

While I wait for that, a Happy New Year to everyone in Dr Turberville's.





### The Practice Season by Alan

The Summer dancing season is officially over; the evenings have drawn in to the point that we'd have to start dancing at 5pm if we wanted to do more than one dance, and we held the Dark Morris on 15th Sept, so it must be over (surely?!).

Now we turn to thoughts of practice. First things first: where and when? The where has changed from last year - we had our first practice at the Village Hall in Ash last week, and it lived up to its billing as a new, bright, airy, spacious hall with all necessary facilities (chief of which of course is closeness to the pub!). The sound is right, it wasn't too cold, there's enough room for a wide set (and possibly for two sets, but that might be pushing our luck). So unless something goes horribly wrong, that's where we'll be found this Winter, every Tuesday evening from 8pm until 10pm. Afterwards, of course, we'll be found in the Bell Inn, checking that they haven't let the beer go bad.

So what do we want to do this Winter practice season? (I keep wondering whether to say practise season, I'm not at all sure whether I'm using the adjectival form of the noun or the adjectival form of the verb; and as a compound with season it becomes a noun phrase, so does that dictate the spelling anyway? Any English experts out there who care to advise?).

Andrew is in charge as Foreman again, and he probably has a plan, but I expect we'll do our bit to sabotage it; someone will suggest a new dance in February, or we'll need to learn something for December. I think a few suggestions were bandied about in the AGM, but nothing very concrete, so we'll have to see what Andrew has in store for us. If previous years are anything to go by, we'll probably spend some time teaching new members the outlines of Wayford, and a few of the Wayford dances; we'll probably spend some time trying to tidy up the way the rest of us dance Wayford (lines? steps? arms?) and other traditions, and perhaps trying to emphasise the differences between the traditions; and we'll probably learn a few new dances, or finish learning some that we started earlier in the year. We might even start something completely new - and in fact last week we started working on a version of Postman's Knock, using the Adderbury version(s) as a basis.

I'd like to bring some Bledington back to the side (one of the original Turbs traditions) and I'd like to explore what happens if we change some tunes and incorporate some more up-to-date songs into our music. But whatever we do, I'm looking forward to a Winter full of fun, social evenings every Tuesday!

The Practice Season

From Drew

So far there is just a lot of hard work in the practice season - and a new dance already worked out. So, Christmas is coming and the Foreman has entertained those that could make it to Chilli and tunes (not by the foreman though, thank goodness!) it was good to see all the posh frocks out and given a wearing!! Thanks to those that made it! there are a few pics on Picasa follow the link in the invitation email team!

## **April 23rd - St George's Day - Podimore Inn Dancing with Wyvern Jubilee, Treacle Eater Clog and Moonshine**

Dr Turberville's celebrated April 23rd with dance, music, beer, food and jollity, not necessarily in that order! What better way to spend an evening. Thanks to Wyvern Jubilee for organising the event, it was good to join with them, Treacle Eater Clog, Moonshine Appalachian and see the debut of The Moonbeams. Thanks also to the Podimore Inn for providing many many sandwiches and Ken remarked that the coffee was good too, a fine accolade!

Alan says: I couldn't agree more! This was definitely the best way to (a) bring down the curtain on the practise season and (b) get us in the mood for the dancing - out season. The event was all about entertainment (yes there was a good audience), rather than dancing for ourselves and there was bags of atmosphere. The real star was of course Jed, who as well as dancing with two sides also made a grand job of announcing.

An honourable mention is also necessary for the first outing of two "new" hats - or maybe hats on two new heads - actually that doesn't describe it either, perhaps I need to spell it out: two old hats (that have danced before) made an appearance on two old (not too old!) heads, that have also danced before - the thing that was new being the way the heads and hats were combined. And hadn't Barb made a great job of revitalising (well, blacking at least) one of them? They must have looked good, because Heather is talking about having to get one! I'm now firmly ""in the mood"" for a good dance season." An honourable mention, also, to our new musicians, Andrew and Julia - well done, we enjoyed your playing, it is wonderful to have a full musical accompaniment to dance to, and we enjoyed your company - this was their first formal outing with Dr Turberville's and I hope they enjoyed it as much as I did! Of course the experience can't have been too bad as they came to the next engagement, dancing up the sun on 1st May, despite having to get up probably the day before in order to get there in time!



**April 27th The Ashill Inn, ASHILL with Taunton Deane Morris Men;**



## May 1st "Sunrise dancing at 5:44 AM" Cadbury Castle, SOUTH CADBURY

From Alan - Anyone have anything to say about the event? Did the sun, in fact, rise? Did the cows enjoy the dancing? May Day 2010: the two teams gather to salute the sunrise What was the breakfast like? I'm dying to know!

Ken says: I thought it was the most silly thing anyone could possibly think of doing - dancing at the crack of dawn, on a hill in front of a heard of cows. I can't wait to do it again next year!



Barbara says: I was amazed and really pleased to see 12 other Turbs turning out at silly o'clock to dance in the dawn. Len, Eric and I actually arrived first, that's never been heard of before!! Closely followed by Julia, Andrew & Janet, Jo&Neil, then Angie. We set off up Cadbury Hill. I carried Eric as he is more manageable since his bricectomy! We clambered up the muddy and rather stony track, (hoping we were actually going up the right hill!) The top of the track opened up to a large field with cows on the horizon. The cows looked bemused as we scuttled around trying to find a place to dance, then when we had they decided to 'moo've in for a closer look. Was it a bird? was it a plane? no it was Ken walking towards us, yet another mad Turb had joined the throng! Where were Drew and Tony? There were red lights on both of the distant hills, should we have been over there??, Drew had the sticks so Jo and I tried Much Wenlock (wedlock according to Len) with hankies (don't think it will catch on) Hey ho time for a photographic opportunity, David Bailey (alias Andrew) erected his tripod and we posed, stop..... four more Turbs were appearing in the distance Drew, Tony Jack and Alison! The cows were getting very interested in their new fieldmates and formed a neat semi-circle around us, we started dancing they strode away (quickly!) fickle animals! Had dawn arrived? (was dawn invited?) it was difficult to tell as it was cloudy BUT NOT RAINING. So we danced anyway and had a laugh. Alison did a grand job for her first dance out - well done! I think the experience has confirmed for her that we are all completely crazy. A man appeared from nowhere and became our captive audient (is that singular for audience?) After we finished our performance the man went and the cows came back forming a circle around us, amazing they learned starburst from that far away. We set off for the pub (how unusual!) and I wish I had my camera because we looked back to see the rest of the Turbs coming down the hill with a line of cows following hotly on their heels. So into the nearest pub for a hearty breakfast. Same again next year chaps??



tony says: The grey sky lightens on the horizon as we approach base camp. Drew is confident that there will be sufficient local bearers available to carry supplies. We draw up in the line of vehicles, surprisingly few of which appear to be appropriately modified for the forthcoming assault.

We debark and Andrew decides it is time that his son, the junior member of the party takes some stick or, in the absence of local bearers, some sticks in a bag.

Alison, a newly recruited party member, walks up with a happy friend in tow, smiling, eager, willing, blonde hair waving in the breeze, panting for it.

Further questioning elicits the following information. Golden Retriever identity, Unknown. Purpose, Unknown. How far retriever prepared to go , Unknown.

Dismissing all notions of strapping stove and kettle to dogs back, Drew picks up his load and strides off towards the start of the climb. Trailing behind despite the relatively easy terrain (dead level tarmac) the rest of the party can only curse marvel at his youthful energy and speculate on where the duracels fit.

Dawn is still some way off, as is sunrise and the going underfoot begins to deteriorate. The silence of steps on tarmac gives way to the light scrunch of pebbles strewn across the potholed surface. Soon the slight give underfoot and the squelching noise suggest that the metallised surface has given way to rocks in mud.

The ascent has begun. Drew and Jack, with light feet belying their heavy loads appear to fly as the slower and less fit members look around desperately. It must be at least 150 yards since the last rest stop. Where are the cafes? Surely there must be a snack bar? But no, the hill climbs inexorably on. Alison, her schoolteachers instincts to the fore, immediately takes on the role of musician encourager. (Yes I know that this seems to be a contradiction in terms as musicians usually need suppression rather than encouragement, but I hadn't had anything to drink since leaving home). In the misty distance the dim figures of Drew and Jack are silhouetted against a gate. This is the first major obstacle, other than the near vertical wall of ice and boulders that formed the path. (This might be an exaggeration. For boulders read pebbles, for ice read mud, for near vertical read 1 in 3). The gate is locked with only a kissing gate at the side to allow continued passage. Drew bravely and carefully places elements of his precious burden over the gate and dances through the narrow access. Pausing to assist his bass carrying acolyte through the complex procedure he is clearly concerned at the non arrival of the rearguard. Then hark, listen carefully. Could that be the wheezing bronchial spasms of a mildly misplaced elephant recreating Hannibal's famous trip across the Alps? Then a thin wisp of smoke creeps round the corner and Tony, cigarette aglow, with all the grace of a hippo out of water heaves into view, followed by Alison doing a "really scary teacher" face. Drew, now desperate to make the summit before the sun, offers to take the banjo. By dint of breathing in and jiggling Tony manages to squeeze through the kissing gate, just and denies that "teachers scary face" had anything to do with it. Still no sign of snackbar or even an ice cream van.

The quagmire like mud now really begins to threaten the success of the expedition. Only the thought of the other musicians who have already skipped their way to the summit drives the banjo player on. How will the band manage, with only a melodeon, violin and piccolo? ( Anyone coming up with a QI like smart answer can expect to be dealt with summarily . The feeling of being needed drives him on. Alison cries "put one foot after another and don't forget to breathe!" as movement becomes so slow as to be almost imperceptible. Just then a miracle happens. A snail, waking from forty winks zooms past Tony and blows smoke at him. This is too much for anyone to take and with a graunching of knees the fat boy resumes forward motion. Drew is now skipping on a flattened out piece of path ahead. "I can see the others" he cries triumphantly.

In his foremanly element now, he eyes the assembling audience of really cute ladies with the cry "How now brown cows?" for he has not noticed the Friesian because everyone

knows that to Dr T's Black, white, brown, yellow or any other colour makes no difference. Colour blind is as colour blind does.

Tony is convinced that he has finally remembered the collective noun for Morris dancers . An Insanity.

There is no madder sight on God's green earth than a Morris side 800 feet up a hill at an iron age castle dancing in the May Day Dawn.

Then we danced a bit. Then we went back down. Then we went to the pub. Then we had breakfast.

The end."

Drew says: Well there is the tale from 2 people who were there; Tony was so low on oxygen by the time he reached the top that he appears to completely forgotten what we danced, the number of invisible people who by their presence messed up several of the dances or the time travelling of Stan Laurel to the top of said hill that occurred at some time during the dawn sog that was May Day this year. He has so completely been put off his stride that the rain - which began to fall the moment we stopped dancing - made the transporting of the Coffee making kit totally irrelevant. He does not recall that the cows chased us off the top of the hill eventually, having become so enamoured with Andrew and posing for his camera that any further attempts at dancing were impossible. Although cold it, was a good morning and the Breakfast at the Camelot was hearty - to the point that Jack ate 4 eggs! we finished off the morning by wishing Alison a Happy Birthday - May the 4th be with you Alison!!

### **May 1st Coppleridge Inn, MOTCOMBE, North Dorset. Handfasting ceremony**



## May 4th The Bell Inn, ASH with Treacle Eater Clog AKA Gemma and the incredible shrinking Baldrics!

4 May 2010 - Bell Inn, Ash by Alan

Tuesday evening at The Bell Inn - hold on, has the season ended already? Are we back to practices? Oh no, of course not - this was an early season visit to our "host pub", in the company of Treacle Eater Clog.

I wasn't there - stricken with illness - so my reporting has to be second hand, but I have seen the photos and I'm sure there are those out there who are able and all-too-ready to correct me if I go wrong.

For starters, something has to be said about kit. I'm sure we had a "kit check" only a couple of weeks ago, and I don't recall any problems then (except that hardly anyone actually brought and wore their kit, ha ha!) so I'm guessing that something has happened to Gemma since then. Or possibly to her baldrics. I wish to avoid charges of sexism so I'm not going to comment further, except to say that the overall effect appeared somewhat unusual. I hope the problem can be cured before long!

What timing! Synchronicity defined!

The first few photographs seemed to show near - perfection in matters of timing (synchronised jumping) and lines; I guess these were photoshopped? Not that I'm doubting our ability to perform but ... the later pictures show a little more variety and seem somehow truer, but of course I wasn't there so what do I know about it? But what seems certain is that everyone seems to have danced hard and enjoyed it.

I have a few snippets of information from Drew, which could possibly do with some "filling in" of detail, but here they are for what it's worth:

"We did go ... There were sarni's ... Neil got the hump 'cos we did too many Lichfield Hay's again!" [too many being how many, exactly? More than the usual quota for a Lichfield dance, perchance? Or were some of them stiched into other dances e.g. Portsmouth just for fun?] "The Bag [Doug Deedman] from the New Forest Medlars came to see us [the people who found the fringe last year!]" [and was Doug suitably impressed / entertained / disappointed / disgusted / afraid to say?] "Gemma has a new baldric - see pics - hers had a fight with a tumble dryer ...

Thank you Drew. I was already sorry that I didn't make it, now I'm devastated (at missing the sandwiches of course). I'm guessing that there was also music in the pub. Roll on next week and the next dance out!



Martin (Gemma's dad) says:  
The Wonderbaldrick is a truly amazing gender independent item. It enables you and your morris kit to move as one, lifting and separating as and when required to the point that it's almost living. Its fame has already spread as far as Bristol and Cardiff.

Drew says:  
Gemma has been on about Mankini's all year and having no takers to model one for her decided to take it upon herself to see what she could do - thanks Gem!







## May 8th HASELBURY PLUCKNETT Church & School fete



## May 11th Castlebrook Inn, COMPTON DUNDON

## May 16th Bath Narrow Boats, CANAL DAY OF DANCE

By Tony

Following in the chariot tracks of the Romans I bravely set off along the Fosse Way towards the town whose patron goddess is Sulis Minerva. I have now as in the past no problem with caravanners providing they are either behind me (a dot dwindling in the rear view mirror) or only encountered on the approach to or on dual carriageways. I believe caravans possess an alien, sentient life force. How else could they know that I am running late. There can be no other explanation for the plethora of vans filling the wet road. Me and the man in the "D" type Jag behind me engage insane overtaking mode sometimes slithering past vans whilst barely keeping under the speed limit. The "D" Type was green and easily capable of matching my chosen speed of XXXmph. Flat out on the Fosse way I took to musing. How much fun could chariot racing have been?

Sadly the "D" type has headed off to Bristol. It is now just me and the road. And the caravans. Where is Jeremy Clarkson when you need him? Tucked up in some twee northern bunker, I bet. The high speed wipers barely clear the water streaming down the windshield. I thought Minerva was the Goddess of Wisdom. It seems that she is Goddess of rain. Never mind, nearly there and just in time to miss the safety briefing. Never mind. Now to park. No spaces. Wander off. Sat Nav wittering on about U turns. A Tory U Turn, never. Thatcher would spin in her grave (Only if dead of course. P'raps it could be arranged... Memo. to self. Send note re assassination to the Ninja Wing of the Morris Ring).

Just then the mobile goes off. I answer it (using the hands free kit of the smug self righteous law abiding few) It's Andrew from the call an idiot service. Parking and bearer transport to the Canal is arranged. In a trice (Morris for five and a half minutes) a space is found, the car unloaded and the trip down the hill to the Canal is executed. We arrive in time to see the little boat chugging off in the distance.

The three of us leap onto the boat. The rear decking is wet and makes an ideal non-friction surface. I wonder if sliding through the gap in the railings and into the Canal was covered in the safety briefing? Passing guitar, banjo and bag into the cabin I carefully examine the rear deck for safety features. It is not possible to injure oneself on the railings protecting the access either side of the rear deck. There aren't any. Len is at the helm,







eyes fixed on the bow with an air of confident serenity. I once read a book on how to pass lie detector tests. Perhaps Len has read it too. Or maybe he wrote it! The diesel engine under the floor runs smoothly and the backwash from the prop soaks the rear deck. The foreman has managed to keep his feet dry. For about seven seconds.



I make my way through the well appointed cabin. Mugs, stove, kettle, coffee, tea and an empty space for the milk. I look for the lifeboats. I count them twice. Zero. Perhaps their location was mentioned in the safety briefing. At least the life jackets are obvious. How thoughtful to supply them ready sized for penguins. Eric stayed at home as he didn't want to expose his newly cleaned feathers to the murky thin mud that makes up the filling of the Kennett and Avon Canal. One or two smaller penguins point out that as they can swim they can probably manage without life jackets. The penguin consensus is that they are sized to match the Squires new, custom sized, baldrics. The penguins confirm that despite having been to the safety briefing they do not know where the lifeboats are.



Cold and damp are not good for arthritic fingers so I dig out the banjo and make my way to the smoking room. The bow is beautifully air-conditioned with water cooled seats and refreshing damp spray. Chugging past the overnight moorings it occurs to me how pleasant it must be to be woken by banjo tunes on a Sunday morning. And free of charge.



Spirits soar as the pub hoves into view. Jumping ashore the two boat crews are reunited. And is the pub open, of course not. Are the heavens pouring forth their offerings to Sulis Minerva. Of course they are. She may well be the goddess of wisdom and spa baths, but either she is the patron of the rain or she hates Morris. Or perhaps melodeons. Their cardboard bellows render them unsafe when wet. Apparently banjos don't mind so much and are content to rust gently. Janet disappears to find a plastic bag and Squire calls for a dance. Clearly the dance works as a rain dance as despite the fact that it never rains on the Turbs it pi\*\*es down today. The pub is still shut and we wander off for coffee.

Hooray the pub and its toilets are now open. Bladders empty, tankards filled we embark again heading towards the swing bridges. Took the opportunity to check for lifeboats. Still none.

The Swing bridge. A delightful device, clearly designed by someone with a warped sense of humour. Most easily operated by women who have the required logical powers compounded with the appropriate dexterity. Men seem to get left on the wrong bank.

There are unwritten rules on right-of-way. Clearly not everyone reads them the same. Boat pilot's collision avoidance skills are tested to the maximum. Steel hulls seem quite impact resilient. Have yet to find the lifeboats. Good news - there appear to be no rats on the boat. Bad news - they all left before we set off. It appears that rats can count. "Right chaps, how many lifeboats? None! Bugger that we're off to the burger bar!" At this point the penguins suggest that the

ships cat stole the only lifeboat to head after the rats. Perhaps rats can't count after all.

Sulis Minerva is still still showering us with blessings. The bow deck, whilst ideal for clogging, is not so good for Morris. An impromptu Old Mill had the foreman clinging on to the roof rail for dear life when Barbara reversed into his spectating spot during a back to back. Mrs Foreman opines loudly that the foreman's risk taking is likely to impact on marriage duration one way or another.



Then it is time to consider lunch. Nearly lost Alan at the Coal Canal.

You have to shut the swingbridge to get back to the towpath. Clearly closely related to rocket science. Jo leaps off the barge, hammer in one hand, spike in the other, mooring on her mind. An interesting demonstration of Newton's Second Law. As the impetus of her launch sent the barge bow towards midstream, so the distance that Jo had to jump increased. Jo's feet landed on the bank. Her stretched out body appeared to make an angle of about 45°. I looked again for the lifeboat and spotted the tired life belt. I needn't have bothered as Jo levitated away from the liquid mud filling the coal canal and somehow landed on the bank. The ducks were surprised. Perhaps the pagan links between witchcraft and Morris dancing are true after all...

Lunch was good. Apparently the rain gods are not entirely in favour of banjo music and arranged for a string to snap. If the second string snaps then the third goes flat by a tone and the fourth by a tone and a half. It's a good job Janet can play.

Then it's time to cross the aqueduct. The foreman turned down the offer to lash him to the roof (there being no mast) and decided instead to tough out the Aquaductophobia. Meanwhile Mrs Foreman discovered that she had left the umbrella at the morning's coffee stop and negotiated with the pilot to arrange to stop on the way back to collect it.

There was much concern in the longboat as the engine appeared to be vibrating rather a lot. The girls in the bow claimed to be having a good time and were too distracted to consider the implications of the lack of a lifeboat. There was a shouty man on one of the boats we passed. It was difficult to make out exactly what he was saying, but I suspect he was merely pointing out that he had too many arseholes. Len, dead centre on course as usual, was miffed as he thought the idiot was impugning his boat driving skills.

Throttling back on the vibro-massager caused cries of anguish from the girls in the bow. We glided to a halt on the bank by the coffee shop. We decided to dance a bit whilst waiting for Sue to collect. The growing crowd had a choice of diversions to watch. Morris dancing on the bank and a socking great barge reversing, broadside to the canal, deliberately trying to ram the gallant little boat containing the crown jewels of the side. Being civilised that which could have made headlines as an example of Canal rage passed without any great problems.

The final question of the day (No, no more comments about lifeboats, absence thereof, life jackets, smallness thereof and absence of rats) was should we dance on the quayside. The rapid departure of the Turbs precluded this, but not before everyone agreed to do the same again next year. Possibly with more pubs. And less rain. And a bigger boat

## May 18th The Saxon Arms, STRATTON with Hobo's Morris



Alan Curtis I took a few too with my new-to-me camera (arrived 18 May), so will upload them when I've found out how to connect my camera to the pc. Great night out, wouldn't mind going to the Saxon Arms again despite the distance!





## May 25th The Greyhound Inn, SYDLING ST NICHOLAS with Festus Derriman



Alan Curtis Good dance out, nice to see Festus Derriman with so many new dancers and clearly enjoying themselves.

## June 1st Fox and Hounds, CHARLTON ADAM

Alan Curtis Great night at the Fox and Hounds; and the threat of rain seems to have kept the invisible men away!

02 June 2010 at 22:24 · Like

Alan Curtis Unfortunately I can't upload any pictures because I can't make the new cable I bought connect to my new camera!

## June 5th WESSEX FOLK FESTIVAL, WEYMOUTH

## June 8th The Lamb, Vicarage Street, TINTINHULL

## June 12th Church of the Holy Trinity, LONG SUTTON JULIET'S WEDDING



**June 12th Church of the Holy Trinity, LONG SUTTON JULIET'S WEDDING**



**June 15th The Lion, WEST PENNARD**

**June 19th TRULL, Taunton Trull Village Fete**



**June 20th TEIGNMOUTH Folk Festival**

**June 22nd The Royal Oak, OVER STRATTON**



## June 26th "D'Urberville Hall, Collier's Lane, WOOL"



Alan Curtis Just back from an exhaustingly HOT performance at the Wool Carnival! A good show. Must remember to ensure there's a beer tent handy for waiting in at the next fete we do... Heather Curtis preferably one that has some beer!!  
Alan Curtis Yes, I knew there was something wrong!  
Alan Curtis ?...and the burger tent had better not have sold out either.



## June 29th The Elms STREET



Alan Curtis Here we met an extremely nice man who knows how to throw knives - and taught him how to dance with sticks. A step backwards for him, then?

## July 5th Market Square, SOUTH PETHERTON with Sweet Coppin

## July 6th Fox and Hounds, CHARLTON ADAM



## July 10th COMPTON DUNDON Hog Roast and Village day

## July 12th Market Square, SOUTH PETHERTON with Sweet Coppin

## July 13th The Arrow YEOVIL



Alan Curtis A fun dance out at The Arrow, Yeovil tonight. The pub was a surprise - plenty of space, space for people to watch, and a choice of real ales - and the rain stopped right on cue.

## July 17th The Unicorn, SOMERTON Morris Fringe



Beetlecrushers again offered their support..



Pigsty - from Bristol joined us for the day.



## July 18th SARUM DAY OF DANCE - the Stones Tour



## July 20th Quarry Inn, KEINTON MANDEVILLE



## July 31st BATCOMBE, nr Bruton, School Hall Wedding at the School Hall, reception at nearby Barn.



Alan Curtis Great fun at the wedding at Batcombe. Lovely location for an off-beat wedding, and the weather was perfect. I particularly enjoyed the procession up the track and across the fields (avoiding the cow pats and the electric fence) to the barn venue for the reception. I wish the lovely bride (the new Mrs Jasia Warren) and her charming husband all the best.

## Aug 1st Charmouth Fete

## Aug 3rd SIDMOUTH Esplanade





The Summer (so far) by Alan

I had a few random thoughts, not really about any particular date or event, so I thought I'd better start a new post.

Injuries. Another year that has been marred by injuries. Poor Len has been out of action practically the whole season. Jan has had to reduce, and reduce, and reduce the dancing (and the walking too). And I've torn my calf again, which means that after a week's rest I can manage a couple of dances and then I'm done in...

Performances. Actually it has been good! I was worried that the "standard" would be lower this year because we had quite a few new members hence a lot of practice time taken up with them, and quite a few new dances - in fact we have what would be by past standards a very large repertoire - but the reduction in precision or accuracy or uniformity or whatever it is has been counterbalanced by a definite increase in enthusiasm and energy and cheerfulness, and the overall result has been, I think, very positive.

Turnout. Now here we do have a problem. The problem is that we are going to far too many dance outs with a weak side, often far short of a set.

In previous years, when we had fewer in the side, the way we managed our dance outs was that each week we'd check the numbers of people who expected to come out to the proposed events over the next fortnight. If there were enough dancers and musicians, we went ahead with the booking (in many cases, for pub nights we chose to go ahead even if there were going to be less than a full set - after all the evenings are just "our night out" and "for us" so we long as we didn't annoy the public it was OK to go out and enjoy ourselves). Of course, last minute unforeseen events also cropped up which sometimes reduced the numbers but in that case, those who couldn't go after all would ensure that the Bagman or Squire was kept informed.

When deciding on paid bookings, we did not book too many, and we ensured that we only booked them for the weeks when no-one was planning to be away on holiday. We generally accepted the booking on the basis that we were low in numbers and therefore our ability to satisfy the booking might be affected by sickness, etc., and charged a lower fee accordingly, but once a booking was made we all did our very best to support it - we did not let our customers down. This meant a level of commitment - to those events - which we accepted once we'd agreed to take the booking. Generally speaking, even if sickness did strike and there were only a handful of us available, we went along and did our best to entertain, rather than let people down.

Now this year, things seem to have gone awry. We have had the advantage of a much larger side, and so should have been confident that we could take on bookings. We've had the benefits of increased communication, new ways of keeping the Bagman informed - and yet the information hasn't been there. We've turned up at dance outs and found that no-one there knew how many people were going to turn up. The number turning up certainly bears little relation to the names put down in the "draft programme". We've been uncertain whether to accept bookings, and then uncertain whether we would have to cancel, and then we've struggled to perform with a weak side.

I am grateful to everyone who has turned out on these occasions, and quite a lot of people have made a supreme effort - including dancing without rests, doing dances that they don't feel they know adequately, dancing in spite of injuries. But it shouldn't have to happen! We should be confident that we know the strength of the side before

we arrive at the venue!

Perhaps we've taken on more bookings this year than we would have attempted in previous years, but I think they've been accepted only when there have been enough expressions of interest.

Communications. So it seems to me that our main problem this year has been communication. We have so many ways to communicate, but they aren't working. Here's what I think we have got this year, and what we've had previous years:

The Programme on the Website. This is available to the general public and is intended to be as correct as it can be - I don't put anything on the programme until I'm sure we are going to be doing it. This is available to those of us who have access to the web, as a reminder of what we have committed to do.

A printed programme. We haven't had one this year, but in the past it has been like the website - a list of those events we are sure we will be doing. Available to everyone, including those who have no web access - if we'd printed one this year!

A "draft programme" shared document on Google Documents, which includes all requests and invitations to events - whether we've agreed to do them or not. This is available to everyone with web access, but I suspect that it is not possible to edit the data without a (free) Google account. In this document there is room for expressions of interest, and expressions of non-availability, so it is a good place to record when people will be away (on holiday, for example). Unfortunately there has probably been a lack of clarity about what is meant by an expression of interest - which is of course different from a commitment to be available.

A "bookings book". This is the way it is done in some other sides - all proposed events are entered in a loose leaf folder and the members of the side are asked to tick the boxes as either "definitely available", "possibly available" or "unavailable" - and the Bagman makes the arrangements accordingly. This is really the same as our online draft programme, except that it is only available at bag sessions.

Email, telephone, post, Twitter. There's no reason why any of these methods shouldn't be used to let the Bagman know who is available and when. In fact, when we get close to an event this is the preferred option since it ensures that the message gets through. By comparison, although Google Documents highlights changes on the draft programme, this is very user - unfriendly and if changes are made to availability on the draft programme there's no guarantee that the Bagman will realise.

Facebook, including the Dr Turberville's Facebook Group. This is really just a subset of the "email" method; it is dependent on people having a Facebook account, and on people logging into Facebook and looking at their account (and at the Group pages). It isn't really usable for serious communication with the side since there are too many people who won't get the message.

MySpace - this is really similar to the Turberville's website, more of a public portal than a place to communicate within the side (and yes, I think we do have a MySpace site, but very little has been done with it).

I think there's room for some thinking about this, and maybe we can try to be more



logical in future. But for now, I would make a plea that if anyone has indicated on the draft programme that they might be interested / available for an event, but then have to withdraw, could they please ensure that the bagman is told - either at a Bag session or if it is closer to the event, by email or by telephone if necessary!

Meeting other sides. Generally speaking I like to meet another side when we can; it adds to my enjoyment of an evening at a pub. But it also adds to the pressure, because having made an arrangement to meet another side they will expect us to turn out and be able to dance! So it was frustrating that we were so low in numbers at Cheddar, when Rag Morris travelled so far to meet us - and probably even more frustrating for Dave, who had the furthest to go from our side.

I think I've rambled on enough, I'm sure there will be comments that you could make about my musings.

Aug 6th Merriott Social Club, Lower St., MERRIOTT

Ah, Um well, you see, what happened was we went to Merriott Social Club - they wanted some dancing 'cos the organisers thought it would be a good thing.

We arrived and Merriott was as lively as ever. 1 person and a dog, the dog had a limp. We met, we went in and apart from 2 organisers, the bar fly and a man on a disco, there wasn't a soul to be seen.

We waited, then we waited some more, then a few people turned up, the men sat near the bar and the women sat near the dance floor in 2 huddles. After about an hour we thought we better get on with it so Alan pinched the mic from the DJ and we were off, Dave got a migraine. Angie went deaf, we danced and then managed to get 3 people to join in and went home, except Alan and Drew went for a beer at The Swan - just to see if the barmaid was still blonde - she was - and sat in conversation with several locals - turned out the social club had run a singles night and we were it to get them together!

Merriott knew this and went to the Swan.

Aug 10th Eli's (The Rose & Crown), HUISH EPISCOPI

14th Aug East St House, East St, WEST PENNARD anniversary Carden Party - WI.

Aug 17th The White Hart Inn, The Bays, CHEDDAR."Dancing with Rag Morris

17 Aug 2010 - White Hart, Cheddar

August 18th, 2010 by Alan

This was a good evening!

We were expecting about 10-12 of us, and 10-12 of Rag Morris; but for reasons unexplained there were only 4 of us dancers and 3 musicians (including Dave, so that made 5 dancers - just as well because my calf was again problematic. We did suggest that Janet should do some dancing but she declined!). Rag came in force, I think they may have had 12 dancers but they were kind enough not to all get up at once!

Having waited quite a while for reinforcements we realised we would have to make a start with our limited resources, but \*bingo\* as soon as Drew suggested The Rose Tree as a first dance (for four) it was observed that Rag know this as well so we asked for

volunteers to make up our set - with the result that we had 4 of us and 8 of them up, doing two sets....

... of course that called for "Mornington Crescent", didn't it? So Drew and I ended up in the Rag set...

We carried on, alternating dances (that Rose Tree counted as one of ours!) until it was really far too dark, but even then Rag were keen to carry on.

Heather Curtis woy hey! That was a great evening, good company and fine dancing especially the Rag Morris jig and the Red Arrows! Beer and food to replenish us too! See you next year Rag Morris.

**Aug 21st COMPTON DUNDON, Castlebrook Inn and Castle Brook Farm**

**Aug 24th The Kings Head, Church Street, MERRIOTT**

**Aug 31st Prince of Wales, HAM HILL**

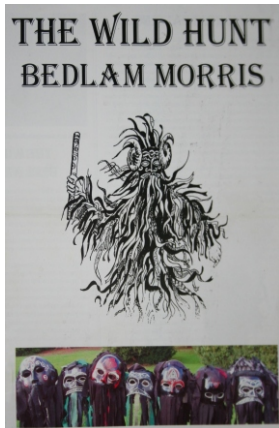
**Sept 4th BURNHAM on SEA Folk Festival**

**Sept 7th The Camelot, SOUTH CADBURY SKITTLES, with BUFFET.**

The buffet was good the skittles was entertaining and the music was excellent! Vernon and Crosby turned out for their first social.



## Sept 11th SWANAGE, Folk Festival



We danced, and in the - at least some did - in kit too!

## Sept 12th "CHEESE FESTIVAL" Sturminster Newton





## Sept 14th The Lion, WEST PENNARD Dark Morris



## Sept 19th MAFEA Festival



We came and no one was awake, the shops were shut and it was cold. We had coffee, tea and some chocolate. Then there was some music then we went into the main tent and did a couple of dances for the 30 or so people there. Then we went home

The end

Practice has begun by Drew

With the AGM over and a few minor changes to the side made we have begun the practice season at ASH, Martock, Tuesdays at 8. so far we have begun working on the Hinton dances and a little bit of Wayford and a revisit to a border version of Cuckoo's nest. Some light relief with some jigs.

After the sporadic nature of the summer with injuries galore we have started the season well, with injuries, this time to the Musician cum dancer [sometimes both at the same time] Dave - the calf thing strikes again!!

On the first week we said au revoir to the squire who left to pastures new, and two of the team were granded as their daughter gave birth to a son - Congratulations ! - and the team's [now original] gran was the proud recipient of a new hip.

by the second week we were pleased to welcome Sue, a new dancer; clearly having danced before she won't take long to get the hang of this Morris thing.

Saturday 23rd Oct marks the last outing for the team in Whites this year, when we visit Barrington Court for their Apple Day. we look forward to seeing some old friends there too.

All for now