

TVMM Log 2023

2022 - Boxing day: It's a lovely sunny Boxing Day and a large crowd had already gathered outside Platform 3 waiting for us to start dancing. We danced there for half an hour or so, before moving on to the Foley Arms, then on to the Hare and Hounds and finally finished off, as usual, at the Griffin. The side included our first female



dancer, Shelley, who after a couple of lessons the previous week was able to participate in several of the Bampton dances. We took advantage of the large crowds to leaflet for recruits - including the ladies. We also raised £680 for the Youth Club.

2023

Practice restarted in January. We were joined by our first local female recruit, Kim, and a couple of men, Dave and Dave. After a few weeks, one Dave did not continue, but 'Big' Dave continued.

Feb 18th - Kennett Ale: After sampling the usual selection of extremely potent pickles, we joined in a number of mass dances before dancing "Dives & Lazarus" as a show dance. The usual tasty feast followed, and then a bit of singing.

March 15th - Teaching Brownies: Back to our old practice hall in Weston Green to teach the brownies a bit of morris. They managed to pick it up quite quickly, so it was an enjoyable evening, topped off by a trip to Marneys afterwards for a couple of pints of London Pride - just like old times!

April 15th - Oxford day of Dance: We managed to muster 8 dancers plus a couple of musicians for a nice sunny



day of dance. We danced at 3 spots allocated by the organisers plus three more of our own - so, a pretty full day of dancing! We managed to engage the public in Cornmarket Street including a group of American tourists who



were actually pretty good. At the spot in Broad Street, we were teamed up with our old friends from Yateley, so we were able to borrow one of them to do a Bledington.

May 7th - Brooklands Transport Museum: A good turnout in the sun for a session of dancing around the aeroplanes and other transport antiques. Afterwards we went to Dick's to dance at a Coronation street party

May 23rd - Saddlers Arms, Send: A combined session at the Saddlers Arms with Fleur de L'ys morris on a lovely summer evening. At one stage we got some of the on-lookers to join in, including one lady who told us she was about to take over the tenancy of the pub, so I hope we didn't put her off!

May 31st - Old Plough, Stoke D'Abernon. A good turnout on a pleasant summer evening, with our friends from Phoenix Clog.

June 6th - Stepping Stones, Westhumble: A trip to the Stepping Stones pub for a joint session with Rampant Roosters, a mixed side from Dorking. We had 8 dancers plus music, so were able to perform a good variety of dances.



June 15th - Platform 3, Claygate: A return to Claygate to dance outside the Platform 3 bar with Ewell St. Mary's morris. A good turnout by both sides, so we were able to carry on dancing until 9.30, by which time it was getting dark. This was much aided by the generosity of the landlord who gave us free beer all night.

June 21st - Mid-summer's day: A trip to Teddington to dance in at an Arts Centre in a former church underneath the Gaia, a massive blow-up globe, then on to the river at Twickenham to dance outside two riverside pubs along with Kingston morris, Greensleeves, and Phoenix clog. A busy night for Kim who was dancing both with us and Phoenix.

June 24th - Summer garden party: Jenny Glaister generously invited us to another party in her large garden. There was a good show of Thames Valley members past and present and a good number of Dick Keen's relatives who had come to celebrate his 75th birthday. A bit of dancing was done, and plenty of eating and drinking!

July 8th - Claygate Flower Show: It looked like it was going to be a washout, but we still turned up for a warm-up at the Hare & Hounds. After a short time the rain stopped and we managed a quick dance before moving on to the Flower Show. We started with an unplanned appearance in the arena for a bit, as someone else failed to show, then continued at two other spots in the field which was then hot and sunny, before repairing to the Griffin for some much needed refreshment.

July 15th - Ewell Day of Dance: We joined Ewell St. Mary's, Phoenix Clog and Black Swan morris to dance outside the Green Man, then on to the traditional refreshing of the wastrels at the village lock-up, the village fete next to the church, a session outside Bourne Hall, then on to the Wheatsheaf before finishing up at the feast in the church hall. We were a bit light on numbers, so had to borrow dancers from other sides.

July 25th - Red Lion, Horsell: Yateley Morris men joined us for a very pleasant evening of dancing- we managed to put out a full side this time.

August 1st. - Hare & Hounds, Claygate: After all the recent joint dancing sessions, we are dancing on our own tonight. Luckily there weren't many of us as we were very cramped for space.

August 17th - Platform 3, Claygate: This was planned as a joint session with Greensleeves, but they were unable to raise a side, so we were on our own. We had 7 dancers and 2 musicians, so were able to dance in two fairly long sessions.

August 26th/27th - Cotswolds: Unfortunately quite a rainy weekend.



At our first stop, the Green Dragon in Cowley, we managed to beat the rain and managed 6 or 7 dances. Then on to the Colesbourne Inn for another 6 or 7. Then on to the Bathurst Arms, where the rain beat down after just one dance, so we stopped for lunch and waited for the rain to stop, which it eventually did, which allowed us



to do a bit more dancing before heading over to the Seven Tuns in Chedworth where we danced in the back garden - in sunshine!. Then back to the hall in Withington for tea and cakes, then down to the Mill for a meal. On the Sunday we dodged more showers, then managed a session of dancing at the Mill before locking up the hall and leaving. We had good numbers and plenty of music with the arrival of a number of country members.

October - Practice restarted with two new members, Susana a clog dancer and Steven an experienced cotswold dancer with several sides.

November 25th - Claygate lights: We're a bit short on numbers, but have enough for a 20 minute spot in the middle of the Parade and then another one outside Platform 3

November 28th, 2023, AGM of Thames Valley Morris Men, 8pm at the Claygate Youth Club

The members met in kit, probably a first for an AGM. This was because we had been teaching a dance to the Youth Club members earlier in the evening.

Present: Mick Jenkins (Squire), Phil Mundy (Bagman), Fran Smith (President), David Payne (Treasurer), Dick Keen (Woodman and Farrier), Phil Turner (Ragman), Alan Bull, Ian Campbell, Susana DOLivera, Kim Gilbert, Kate Jackson, Mick Sargeant,

Apologies for absence:, Tim Cawdron, Robin Kalinowski

1. 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 Ridley, Simon Saunders, Christopher Seager-Thomas, Cyril Smith, Gordon Smith, Mervyn Stanley, Mike Sugrue, Phil Sylvester, Bill Tofts, Steve Tovey and Billy Wakefield. No new names have been added this year

2.Approval of the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting: Approved.

Matters arising from the above Minutes: None.

3. Reports:

Squire: We've certainly felt the benefit this year of the decision we took at last year's AGM to open the side to allcomers. We felt this almost immediately when Dick's daughter Shelley attended our last Tuesday practice of 2022, learnt 9 dances in the one evening and then danced them out on Boxing Day.

Boxing Day was a great success, and the weather stayed dry and mild. A massive crowd was waiting for us at Platform 3, and most of them followed us round to the Foley, the Hare & Hounds and the Griffin.

We then managed quite a full programme of dancing in 2023. We met up with lots of other local sides - at the Saddlers Arms with Fleur, The Old Plough with Phoenix, The Stepping Stones with Roosters, Platform 3 with Ewell St. Mary's, two riverside pubs in Twickenham with Kingston Morris, and the Red Lion with Yateley. We had a very enjoyable time teaching the Weston Green brownies a stick dance (with not too many injuries!). Then a good day dancing round Oxford in April. We were sent a very good video by a French visitor of us dancing Idbury Hill Bledington there remarkably well! The side marked the Coronation weekend by dancing at Brooklands, but I can't say how that went as I was away in Greece. Jenny Glaister carried on a remarkably long tradition of holding a garden party in Woodham at midsummer which I gather also went really well - although again I was missing in action as my daughter had chosen that very day to get married. Also, our long tradition of dancing at the Claygate Flower Show was maintained, as was our traditional autumn trip to the Cotswolds.

As regards dances, the side has tackled so many traditional dances from so many different traditions over its long history that it's often difficult to decide what to do next. A suggestion was made to me last year to chose 10 core dances, then always start each outing with them, and I think that's probably helped our standard of dancing. It doesn't always work though. The temptation on something like the Cotswold weekend is to try and avoid calling the same dance twice. So this year we managed to get through 30 different dances from 7 different tradltions, and only repeated one dance!

Practices have been very well attended this autumn, which has made it very enjoyable for all, and I'd like to thank everyone who's attended them - particularly Kim who's hardly missed a single one - which clearly shows in her standard of dancing.

Looking forward, It seems to me that the side has a good future. This time last year I wasn't nearly so optimistic.

Bagman: 2022 -23 saw a full return to normal activities. We had a full programme of events throughout the year though we had to decline or cancel some events due to a shortage of numbers. In total we danced out 18 times, the same number as last year. Generally numbers were better than last year and we were able to reduce the number of times we used dances for 4. The addition of Kim to the side was very welcome.

Recruitment has shown an improvement, we have had newcomers coming along – we now need to keep them. Since October it has been very refreshing to have larger numbers at practice. Our presence back in Claygate continues to improve our connections in the village. I am getting increased enquiries about when we are dancing, hopefully this will lead to more interest in joining.

Treasurer: Accounts were presented showing a very small deficit (£16). Hal subs largely balanced the hall rental, and the event income subsidised other non-paying events.

Sticks & Animals: *Sticks* - Not wishing to tempt fate, I might almost say I am awash with sticks. We have the practice set, a full trolley waiting for us to dance out, a dozen more prepared ready to replace casualties, and another dozen in the raw. I also have a stock of some 20 lightweight sticks for when we get asked to teach younger people – youth club, Scouts, etc. We do not seem to be breaking long sticks as much as in the past, and we hardly ever do short stick dances these days.

Beasts - We have two beasts: Shergar the Horse and Billy the Goat. The beasts have been feeling most neglected this year as they only made a few brief appearances at Boxing Day and limited other events. When we go out with only 6 dancers guess where they are? in the boot of my car. I would welcome extra beast-riders, particularly on big events like Boxing Day. The crowd expects to see both animals, and there is only one of me. And with increasing age, I have less stamina.

Ragman: Sufficient supplies to meet future needs. About half a dozen hats, plus some old bellpads.

President: The President noted that the change to a mixed side had been a great success and the side was much better following the change

4. Election of Officers : There was no competition for any of the officer positions and the incumbents were re-elected by acclamation:

President: Fran Smith (his job is for life) **Squire:** Mick Jenkins **Bagman:** Phil Mundy **Treasurer:** David Payne
Ragman: Phil Turner **Webmaster:** Jan Lucas **Animals and sticks:** Dick Keen **Recruitment:** David Payne

The Squire indicated that having completed 5 years in the role, he would look to stand down next year.

In addition, Ian Campbell agreed to provide support to the Bagman

5. Programme for 2024: The Bagman sought views on events for the year ahead. The following issues were agreed.

- Weekends at Cotswolds and Somerset to go ahead, Saturday events to consider – Horsham, Oxford, Ewell, and the Claygate Flower Show. Whilst there was support for dancing at a shopping centre (Kingston, Walton) to aid recruitment, this had to be balanced against the total numbers of Saturdays. Brooklands was also seen as a possible venue.
- Each member to organise a local tour. Potential pubs could include Pearmain, Onslow Arms, Castle Ottershaw, Marneys as well as local Claygate venues.
- Consideration to be given to using two pubs on a tour, provided distance is small.
- Tours to be held with Ewell, Phoenix, Fleur, Roosters, Yateley, Datchet. In addition Ian to check with Buckland and Pilgrim
- An Ale to be held, probably in March
- A Garden Party to take place at Jennys in June / July
- Hochtide to be investigated

6. Any other business

a) Ian Campbell suggested that we perform a Mummings Play. This was considered a good idea and will be tried in 2024. Ian will provide details

b) In the absence of a motion from Peter Jones – Dick Keen proposed that the kit should be amended to allow Breeches to be worn. After a very short discussion, this proposal was defeated.

c) Whilst the proceeds of the 2023 Boxing Day collection will be given to the Claygate Youth Club, options for 2024 were considered and it was agreed that a local Foodbank would be appropriate

The Meeting closed at 2125

Phil Mundy, TVMM Bagman, 7 Dec 2023.

December 26th - Boxing Day:



The weather is really kind again this year, and it's sunny and mild. After dancing outside Platform 3 for half an hour, we head round to the Foley Arms, where history is made by KIm dancing an excellent Nutting Girl jig to become a full member of the side. Then it's round to a very crowded Hare & Hounds where we just about find room to dance before heading round



to the Griffin for our final session. 'Big' Dave made his first public appearance dressed as the Jester. As a result this was the first time in a number of years that the Jester and both beasts made an appearance at the same time. We raised £700 for the Youth Club.