

Raggle Taggle

AUSTRALIAN MORRIS

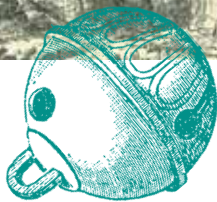
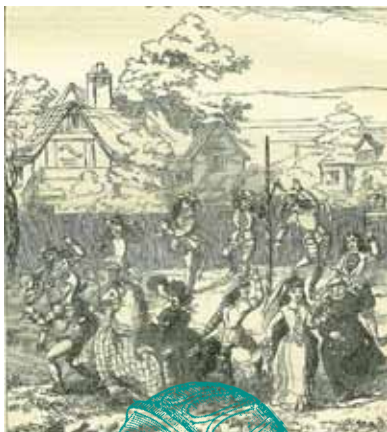


July 2014

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SQUIRE'S REPORT

TIM BECKETT



Greetings to all and welcome to the first edition of Raggle Taggle for some time. We may not make it quarterly but the editorial team (thanks Nat, Steph and Emma) is looking to circulate the good news at least biannually.

It's been a busy few months getting my feet in line - despite my natural propensity to hook left and galley right at the same time - and I certainly couldn't have done it without some careful shepherding from Nat and sound advice from many colleagues. I've also been trying to get around to see sides in action and I can report that the Morris is alive and well and blossoming in Australia.

On that note, many thanks to the Jolley Hatters for an outstanding Wasail in Huonville - with able assistance from Red Raven and Willie Smiths Apple Shed (I can personally vouch for both their Bone Dry and Coffee ciders). It's fantastic to see the spread of the "old" traditions and the good folk of Tassie turned up in droves, painted up and be-tattered, for a great week-end. Unfortunately I ended up with Standerwick Knee which, as all of the old Bill Tidy Cloggies fans will remember, is "a condition of elderly dancers brought on by too much of the other". My doctor was not in the least sympathetic - when he finally finished laughing!

I know a lot of you are off to Perth, as am I, for the PMM 40th so the tradition continues.

We have proposed a very full program to the NFF with all eight side applications - 5 street and 3 display (Fairies, Joakers and Hedgemonkies) - submitted. I'll be meeting Pam Merrigan, the NFF Director in early August to argue our case and it'll be interesting to see how she responds to our request for 100 tickets! We have proposed Kids' Festival workshops (we need to grow our own next generation!), a Morris Singing and Music workshops and a revival of Maypole. I will be pushing for a bookable space to call our own for massed displays. Over the next few months, I'll be coming to you all for suggestions for song lists (Joakers and Red Raven have put their hands up to get the choir moving), formats for the Music workshops (again, the Joakers are interested) and common massed dances. I believe that we all should have at least one Cotswold, Border and Northwest dance in common, so suggestions gratefully received. I'd also love to see Molly at the NFF so do I have a volunteer to propose and teach a dance? Surlies have offered to coordinate a Morris Flash Mob in Civic (probably on the Saturday) and we are also looking

...Cont. P13

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BAGMAN'S REPORT

BAG'S REPORT

Mwah hahahaha I am back again and have some exciting things to work on. Membership list updates and insurance information will be forthcoming, as well as news about a National Ale.

The constitution is FINALLY done and dusted. WA have finally stopped asking for amendments, so we are free from having to pass new special resolutions! Until we start looking at the potential for a mediation process in the off chance we can't all get along and dance nicely together. If anyone would like to chat to me about this, please do.

Oh and please join the new Oz Morris mailing list! We've had to change from yahoo to google thanks to yahoo

being awful and not letting us add new members. I've been slowly sending out invitations, but it's much easier if you request membership. You can join here:

[groups.google.com/
forum/#!forum/oz_morris](https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/oz_morris)
or email
bag.amr@gmail.com



Natalie Rolfe
Bag, AMR

HATCH MATCH DESPATCH...

ALAN SISLEY
(CANBERRA MORRIS MEN, SYDNEY MORRIS
MEN, BLACK JOAK MORRIS)

4 August 1952 - 9 February 2014

Alan entered the Morris community via the Canberra Morris Men in about 1978, whilst he was a student at ANU. He was also included in the spoof 'Hells Bells Morris', the Canberra travelling Morris side.

Back in Sydney, he joined the Sydney Morris Men, but a damaged Achilles tendon brought his dancing career to an end. However, Alan continued to attend Morris dancing functions and socialised with all the Morris sides.

I first met Alan at a Morris party in Duncan and Judy's house in Canberra at the end of 1980 and was impressed by this friendly, smiling, chatty bloke. After that I met up with him many times in both Canberra and Sydney, as he would attend many of the Morris functions in both cities and was friends with all the Morris people.

In Sydney I had joined the Blackwattle Morris Men and as Alan was friends with most of the side, I also used to see him at the gatherings of some members of this group.

There was a vibrant folk scene in Sydney in the early 1980s and Alan was involved in this. Although the Morris and folk music people did not always see 'eye to eye' at that time, many of the Morris people were involved in both. So I would often see Alan at folk venues, either as a performer, or as a member of the audience, who would then be persuaded to perform anyway.

In Sydney, as in Canberra, there was a strong social scene with

the Morris and Alan being a singer and raconteur, was often heard at many a social event in both cities, as there were strong ties between the two. I often travelled to Canberra for a Morris party, to find that Alan had preceded me and was holding court as a centre of attention at the party.

He also organised, with Caro, some of his own parties in Sydney, which were always interesting and attended by a diverse group of people from all walks of life.

I remember meeting up with Alan and Caro at the Longford Folk Festival in Tasmania. Realising it was their honeymoon, I tried to leave them to their own pleasures, but they wouldn't have that. Alan produced a bottle of Brown Muscat and insisted that we sit down and drink it all. Not only that, we arranged to meet up again the next day.

It was sad for the Sydney Morris community when Alan and Caro moved out of the city, so that Alan could take up his new job out of town.



HATCH MATCH DESPATCH cont...



But we hadn't lost him completely, he would show up

unexpectedly at festivals, parties and dances. One time he appeared out of the mist at a Canberra National Folk Festival, wearing a long black cloak and black hat, looking like the Grey Ghost. It took a while to recognise him, but it was the same Alan Sisley, although now he did not drink! But he had the same camaraderie and joined us in the beer tent, regaling us with stories of his life out of Sydney.

He maintained his links with the Morris tradition when he moved to Orange and joined up with Black Joak Morris whenever he was back in Sydney.

Alan is a big loss to the Morris community and a big loss to me as a friend.

Peter Kneeshaw

LETTERS

ATTENTION STEVE DANCER

Hello all,

You may be interested in a video that I compiled featuring the Horsham Tradition style of dancing. It was way back in 1979 that I first created the 'Horsham Tradition' which now has 15 plus Handkerchief and stick dances plus two jigs. It features some clips of dancers around the globe including material from your neck of the woods.

Hope you enjoy this creation, I have, without success been trying to contact Steve Dancer to ensure that he is aware of this video. It would be most appreciated if it's possible for anyone to pass this message onto him.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XHxpNaECego>

Best Regards
Barry Dewdney

WHAT INTRODUCED YOU TO MORRIS DANCING?

THE FULL RESULTS OF THE AMR'S MINI CENSUS

will be released next issue, but for now we wanted to share the best responses to the question: What introduced you to Morris dancing?

Men in tights!!!

Some weird people made me go

A girl waiting until I was drunk and then conned me into it

It was my destiny, I was inevitably drawn to it

Watching Richard Greenwood

A gradual degradation

The prospect of women and drink

I can't remember which started first, drinking brown dog or dancing the Morris

On leaving marriage I wanted an outlet

Britannia Morris Men gave me an orange

Dog walking

Internet googling

Saw it at the National and was like

THIS IS THE BEST THIS IS FUTURE ME

Osteoporosis

SIDE REPORTS

RED RAVEN, VIC

The recent past kicked off for Red Raven with the Warrandyte Festival in March. This is a fixture on our calendar and involves a parade up the main street, dancing at the festival and dinner, songs and frivolity at the Hamiltons'. Lollipop Man Adderbury was the processional, with words suitably toned down for the mixed audience. This year lubrication was provided by 2-Brothers brewery and Kellybrook Cidery. The Kellybrook stall featured photos of Britannia and friends at the annual Cider Festival, which were appropriately autographed by the end on the day.

In early April we helped the Friends of Mentone Station and Gardens celebrate their "new" railway station's centenary. It was unusual for us to have the discipline of dancing to order for a fixed time. But the show went well and the punters were happy.

Also in early April we danced in a shoot for a TV show. I can tell you it was for the ABC and for a new series by a well-known comedienne but other than that we're contractually obliged to secrecy. The first day 14 of us took time off work and assembled at Abbotsford Convent only to be rained off. We retired to the pub, made famous in The Sullivans for a fine lunch and chat. On the rescheduled date 12 of us still managed to skive off work. We filmed take after take dancing a capella and unembellished so they could get the sound right. Heaven knows what the musos were doing but they were pumping and blowing without sound, who knows how long they've been faking it. Then they filmed close-ups of us dancing to camera, waves of hankies, and bells. Jacka was instructed to stand in front the camera and wave it up and down which brought to the filming to a close. We stayed behind for a drink at the Bakery, lunch and a good dance.

May Day saw the traditional gathering at All Nations Park in Northcote to dance the sun up with a good representation of Red Raven, Brandragon and Britannia. With a lovely clear morning we were able to see the sun rise over Lake Mountain. Martin Pearson made an appearance which only proves what we suspected that he's a closet Morris supporter. For the rest of the day we danced out in Brunswick Street Fitzroy beginning at the Little Creatures Brewery and ending at the Napier Hotel. Some of us fitted in a Britannia practice making it a 15 hour day-of-dance marathon. Rumour has it that those remaining after dark at the Napier were asked to leave for singing too enthusiastically in the presence of rock royalty Paul Kelly,

though the man himself seemed quite at ease with the impromptu show.

Occasionally the interests of real world and the Morris world overlap and so it was with the Great Australian Beer Spectacular in late May. Over 100 craft beers and ciders on offer in the grand setting of the World Heritage-listed Royal Exhibition Building, 12,000 punters and 20 hours of Morris dancing. This was a gig well beyond the range of Red Raven alone, and so we engaged the generous support of Brandragon and Britannia to share the load, the beer tokens and the cash. About 30 dancers and musos turned out at least once during the weekend with some of the keenest participating in all five sessions. Once we got used to dancing with the constant background noise we managed very well. Dave Purdue's amplified box made a world of difference. By part way through the second Friday session a number of brewers were giving us free beer and cider, for which we were very grateful.



Dancing with Red Raven has its "train wrecks," and by way of evidence I would present our attempts at Molonglo Mayhem's Bitsa Six and the Litchfield Hey; going off the rails is all too regular for some of our number as Paul Kelly has witnessed. In June it happened on a real train with most of the side aboard. While we will make light of it, it's sobering to think we were only a few metres from tumbling down a steep embankment with even more serious consequences. As it is, the Victorian Goldfields Railway has a serious problem to recover the carriages, repair the track, meet safety standards, and restore public confidence.

Anyhow, it's a good story and here it comes. For the past few years the Victorian Goldfields Railway, which runs a tourist steam train from Castlemaine to Maldon, has held a festival of all things steam in Muckleford called Mucklefest.

SIDE REPORTS cont...



Pam Connell introduced us and we've danced and been paid in free train tickets. We've been trying to organise a day out to use up the tickets for some time and this finally took shape on June 15. The plan was to start dancing in Castlemaine, ride the train, lunch and dance in Maldon, ride

back and dance in Castlemaine until we'd had enough. Here is a chronology of the events leading up to, during and immediately after the derailment as I remember them:

10:00am, inform the Maldon Hotel 30 Morris dancers and associates are about to descend on them for lunch. 'Oh shit' comes their response.

11:30am, still waiting at Castlemaine Station so we might as well have another dance.

11:45am, Morris folks settle into 1910s first class carriage, very salubrious.

12:15pm, I complete my Rooseveltian "vote for me" speech from the back of the carriage to bemused passers-by as train finally departs.

12:16pm, phone Maldon Hotel, 'We'll be late.'

12:20pm, someone yells 'there's a bar on the train.' Morris Dancers stampede.

12:21pm, overloaded refreshments car lurches sickeningly to starboard as train derails.

12:22pm, phone Maldon Hotel to cancel lunch. 'Oh shit'.

12:23pm, Morris Dancers assist drinks to disembark train, all shaken not stirred.

12:24pm, spontaneous outbreak of Morris Dancing in the

street.

12:27pm, Red Raven nails Litchfield Hey on second attempt.

Good photos thanks to Tania Poole, Kirsty Greenwood and Rob Wharton.

Plan B. We traipsed across Castlemaine to our niece's pub the Bridge Hotel where we then wedged in for a long session of dancing. There were enough Brandragons and Britannia present to add in a few North-West and KSM dances. Brendan and Kat have converted an old-blokes' pub into a small piece of Northcote with live music most nights and some really top bands, both local and touring. They have Holgates and Mountain Goat on tap and Harcourts cider in bottles. The food, well I'll leave that to Juzzie: 'there are six things on the menu I really want to eat and I don't want to choose.' We disbanded once Rob Pilgrim had reached the quota of dances needed to meet his criterion of being worth the trip down. Post dancing we listened to the current Sunday arvo band Grumpy Neighbour for a while.

The final stop that day for the remaining ten of us was the Railway Hotel for a swift pint before the next train to Melbourne, or I think it ended up as several before the train after that. What a find! Thunder Road x 2, Prickly Moses and Holgate ESB hand-pulled. It's a lovely country pub with a wood fire, friendly staff and the food gets great reviews. To round out the day, we're on the train home to Melbourne and a cyclist asks me: 'can I leave my bike here?' I respond: 'don't know sorry,' him again: 'aren't you a Conductor?' Like, I'm wearing tatters and a top hat with a fox tail. Just as well I hadn't blackened the face or we might have relived a glorious scene from Five Go Mad in Dorset.

About ten of us plus entourage are heading down to Tassie in mid-July for the Huon Valley Cider Festival and Jolly Hatters Ale. The Festival is courtesy of Sam Reid at Wille Smiths Cider whose wares we were lucky to sample at the Beer Spectacular. The cider aged in port barrels was delicious though not to everyone's taste. In preparation we are learning wassailing songs and a couple more Border dances, apologies Squire Tim, as our contribution.

The Red Raven 10-year Ale will be held 15-17 August in the Yarra Valley east of Melbourne. Details are being circulated, and all are welcome.

**Graeme Hamilton
Squire**

SIDE REPORTS cont...

SURLY GRIFFINS, ACT

The Surly Griffins celebrated their second anniversary this May and are still going strong, with about 20 dancers and half a dozen excellent musicians. The Griffins are really starting to relax into their preferred laconic style which is strongly influenced by the Moulton Men of Northamptonshire. People new to Morris have constantly joined the side, which is encouraging, and they been helped along by some experienced dancers swelling the ranks in recent months, including Karina and Ian (Ragged Band) and Wendy (ex-Molonglo Mayhem). Sadly our Bagman Anne-Marie Slattery has had to take a break from dancing, but thank you Anne-Marie for all your support! Long-time dancer and musician Crit has stepped in as our new Bagman.

A highlight for eight of the Griffins this year was participating in the New Zealand Morris tour in beautiful Nelson, NZ. The Griffins loved getting an insight into the very strong New Zealand Morris tradition. The surroundings, from seashore to glorious mountains, and the cultural treats of Nelson (in particular WOW, the World of Wearable Art museum) made for a very memorable week.

Thank you Nelson Morris!

The Surly Griffins were pleased to dance three times for May Morning this year. Greeting dawn from atop Mount Ainslie was a very cold but apt and beautiful way to start

the proceedings. Mt Ainslie is a central point in Walter and Marion Burley-Griffin's design for Canberra, which was based on sacred geometry principles. The mountain therefore has a both local and esoteric significance. Descending to central Civic, a second round of dancing took place in Garema Place, the City's original main square. Breakfast was had at the famous Gus's Café; one of the first cafes in Australia to establish, after some conflict with local government, the European sidewalk café style. The following Sunday, the Griffins danced again for the Oxford Society at the lovely Carillon by Lake Burley Griffin, helping to consolidate the Society's facsimile of the Magdalen May Morning tradition of bells, choir and Morris dancing.

The Surly Griffins continue to revel in the wonderful diversity to be found within Morris and to connect to other sides from around the world. Aside from all the connections made at the NZ Morris tour, travelling Griffins have caught up with several sides from the UK; Boekka, Beltane Border, Dr Turberville's Morris, Chalice Morris Men, Biker Urban Morris; and Canada; Vancouver Morris Men, Tiddly Cove Morris, Green Fiddle Morris. We are looking forward to more Morris connections and adventures!

**Simon Wall
Squire**

BLACK JOAK MORRIS, NSW

News from Old Sydney Town

*As the night was falling slowly over city, town and bush,
From a slum in Jones's Alley came the Captain of the Push,
And his whistle loud and piercing woke the echoes of the Rocks,
And a dozen ghouls came slouching round the corners of the blocks.*

After another hectic festival season, our Squire Jayden abandoned us for foreign climes, leaving myself in charge as "Acting Squire". The handover came in the form of a small badge being flung across a set as we danced up the sun on May Day, overlooking the Sydney Harbour Bridge. True to form, no one had remembered to bring any alcohol, so we trooped into the Rocks to find sustenance; invoking the ghosts of The Push as we went, heckling with little wit and much impunity the early morning exercisers. Luckily we found a place that does both beer AND coffee at daybreak, so CRISIS AVERTED.

Since then, we have settled into winter, learning Fieldtown (our musos reminding us frequently that 'It's supposed to look graceful!') and expanding our Brackley repertoire.



News from any other sides about their favourite dances in either tradition most welcome so we can perhaps learn the same for future massed dancing. We would also be interested in hearing from anyone who does the Upton-on-Severn Hanky Dance.

SIDE REPORTS cont...

We have welcomed six members (!) who are learning our idiosyncratic Morris style with a certain amount of bravery. Cathy, Andy and Chris had their first dance-out at the Old Fitzroy and performed both adequately and admirably. We have welcomed back Carissa, but temporarily lost Kneeshaw and Duncan as they sail around Australia; Beth and Lol are on some sort of international jaunt (not together), and Holstein has relocated for a couple of years into the wilds of outback Queensland where she is mining... Or something. Ken has been lost to the Central West of NSW and has co-founded a new side with the Sisleys and other conspirators.

I'd also like to welcome you all to attend our 10th Birthday Ale. Advertisement somewhere else in this fine publication...

Best quote from practice so far this year: 'It looks bad, but people still do it. You can make that choice yourself.'

The three words we selected to describe ourselves for the Morris census: sexy immature drunkards.

Stephanie Swanson
Acting Squire

THE ORANGE RUFFIES, NSW

Orange Cool Climate Morris

Orange has a long history of Morris growing – North West, Border, Molly, and of course Cotswold. Morris has been grown in the Orange district since it was settled in the nineteenth century. The first commercial production of table Morris followed the arrival of the railway in 1877. By 1925, 450 acres (180 hectares) were planted to table Morris. The modern development of the Morris industry in the Orange region began in the early 1980s and by the late 1990s there were 1350 hectares underfoot.



The Orange Morris region is defined as the area above 600 metres in the local government areas of Orange, Cabonne and Blayney and can be usefully described as a circle around Orange. The Orange region is good for Morris growing and Morris making due to a combination of geology, soils, climate and temperature. Together these factors combine to produce

Morris dancers of distinct flavours and colour. The climate perhaps plays the biggest part in giving Orange some distinct natural advantages - the cool temperatures during most of the growing season coupled with dry autumn conditions are ideal for Morris dancing.



Mount Canobolas, an important geological feature also plays its part, not only giving the district its rich basalt soils but also, because of its altitude, giving greater reliability to the rainfall. Overall the region has some excellent natural advantages. The climate and soils also influence the selection of varieties for planting. The region is planted to 60% Cotswold varieties and 40% North West varieties - which says something about the region but also about what the national palate is dancing in the 21st century.

The Orange Ruffies practice Monday evenings at 7pm, at the Orange Regional Conservatorium, Studio 6.

Clive Sisley
Founding Member

SIDE REPORTS cont...

BELSWAGGER AT THE GOOMERI PUMPKIN FESTIVAL, QLD

Pumpkins, pumpkins, pumpkins. Why pumpkins you ask? Because pumpkins are awesome! Why else? All the wonderful things you can do with pumpkins: pumpkin soup, pumpkin scones, pumpkin pie, pumpkin fudge, pumpkin wine, the list goes on...

Where can one find such an abundance of pumpkins? Why, the Goomeri Pumpkin Festival, of course! Held on the last Sunday of May in the sleepy little town of Goomeri, about three hours north-west of Brisbane, this festival is home to much loved pumpkin-related attractions. Some of these include gigantic pumpkins, and the ever popular pumpkin rolling competition. One of the entrants in last year's pumpkin rolling competition decided to use a butternut pumpkin in a 'Go banana! moment that resulted in smiles all 'round.

The most loved of the attractions at this wonderful festival, an attraction that people come from metres in every direction once a year to see, is Belswagger Morris. Belswagger's day begins with a gruelling slog down the main street as part of the main parade, entertaining our beloved fans, gathered about the historic town clock, with our demonstrations of poise, gracefully sidestepping the horse manure, energetically capering over the camel urine, all the while trying not to overtake the pumpkin on the lawnmower, and avoiding being run over by the CASE steam tractor bringing up the rear.



Once the parade is complete, it is then time for a relaxing hike back up the hill, punctuated by our adoring fans



screaming for more, and providing advice on the application of stealth technique. We usually succumb to their demands and pause by the town clock to provide some of that entertainment which is in such demand. After performing for them several riveting dances, our dazzled and star-struck fans wander off in search of other pumpkin-related activities to recover with. We then go in search of more dance-loving punters looking to have their minds blown.

After seeking out and leaving a number of other gatherings mentally exhausted and in need of a good lie down, it's off to the local for a break and a much deserved and agreeably priced schooner. 'Down it in one my son, can't sit here, gotta run,' is the attitude adopted by some of the Belswaggers in the hope of seeing some of the lesser attractions and commence the hunt for the inevitable pumpkin soup, the greatest in the land. First-timers also take the opportunity to obtain a coveted Goomeri Pumpkin Festival Commemorative Pin, more colloquially referred to as the Goomeri Pumpkin Man, whose dance has been replicated and showcased at the Woodford Folk Festival Fire Event.

Bellies filled with soup and cider, the Belswaggers gird their loins for one final demonstration of prowess and tradition out the front of the pub. Another round of dance-induced screams and fainting, cheers from the onlooking patron, and we take our leave for the long drive home. The Goomeri Pumpkin Festival has successfully concluded for another year.

Daniel Townley
Fore

SIDE REPORTS cont...

BRITANNIA APPARENTLY PERFORM AT THE KELLYBROOK CIDER FESTIVAL

Recently, I attended a dinner party where I found myself seated next to a member of Britannia (who shall remain unnamed for now). The topic of conversation moved on to Britannia's involvement with the Kellybrook Cider Festival.

'Hang on a minute!' I said to him, 'I'm supposed to be tracking down one of you Britannia men to write a Kellybrook report for our harvest special in the next newsletter! But so far, despite all our pleas and nagging no report has been forthcoming.'

'That would be right,' he snorted, 'My side is useless at that sort of thing. Don't expect to get anything from them.'

'But now I have the good fortune of being seated next to you, a member of Britannia, and in Queensland of all

places! Perhaps you can write the report for me?'

'Oh... No. I'm on holidays for the next month. I can't do it.'

'Then I'm afraid sir, that I shall have to name and shame your side in the newsletter.'

'GOOD! DO IT! YOU SHOULD!' he bellowed.

So, Britannia Morris Men, I am hereby publicly naming and shaming you.

My still unnamed dining companion then proceeded to regale us with tales of Jinky, the travelling Morris bear, who witnessed things at National Folk Festivals that no innocent teddy-bear should... But that's for another issue.

Emma Jones
not a member of Britannia Morris Men

PERTH MORRIS MEN, WA

It has been a big year for the Perth Morris Men. As many of you will be aware it is our 40th Anniversary this year. The Perth Morris Men first danced in Hay Street, Perth in March 1974.

The first stand of the year was helping to celebrate the Chinese New Year in early February. For one reason or another we could only get commitment from four dancers and one musician but fortunately the gig was only a five minute bracket on stage. Those of us who attended were "rewarded" by being forced to share a changing room with some rather attractive and minimally dressed (with the exception of their head gear) young ladies who were part of another dance troupe. I suspect that if we get invited again next year we won't have any problems getting a side.

March was a busy month starting with the annual Down South Tour on the long weekend. We were joined by some of the Mad Tatters Morris at Yallingup and visited five breweries over the three days.

The next Saturday was the celebration of our 40th year by once again dancing in Hay Street. We were joined for the hour and half of dancing by the Fair Maids of Perth and the Mad Tatters Morris. Local and not so local folkies came to have a look including Ted Egan. There were also quite a few ex Perth Morris Men including some who were visiting from England. The celebrations were concluded with lunch at the Moon and Sixpence.

Next up was the annual Medieval Fayre and the following weekend the annual Guildford Heritage Festival, both very enjoyable occasions.

April was possibly even busier kicking off with a wedding. One of our own, long-time Perth Morris Man Bill Parker tied the knot with Ingrid and invited us along to dance at the reception. From a wedding to a birthday, Buddha's, we danced for Buddha's Birthday the next day. The next weekend was Easter and we were one of three display sides at the National and along with the Mad Tatters Morris represented the featured state. As usual a good time was had by all at the National. No rest for the wicked as they say, the following weekend saw us performing at Fairbridge Festival with ten dancers and four musicians.

Into May with an enjoyable May morning dance at Kings Park with the Mad Tatters and one Fair Maid. The next weekend we were off to Toodyay for the Moondyne Festival and that was it for the first half!

The focus now is the 40th Anniversary Ale scheduled for the first weekend in September with an optional extension to Yallingup and Margaret River areas. RSVP is 25 July. At this stage it is shaping up to be a good Ale with an entire side from Adelaide and a number of Dragons, Joakers, SENWers etc.

Steve Mansfield
Squire

SIDE REPORTS cont...

ADELAIDE MORRIS MEN

As an update for general interest and starting at our Ring Meeting in 2013 for no particular reason, the AMM have been kept off the streets by various undertakings in the last year and a bit including, but not limited to:

- Our Inaugural Australian Morris Ring Meeting, held at Woodhouse in the Adelaide Hills in April of 2013, was attended by local and English sides and (UK) Morris Ring officials. It kicked off with a Friday meet and greet, a Saturday tour of the Adelaide Hills with a feast that night and concluded with an all-singing, all-dancing Sunday of visits to church, brewery and the Port hotels. A Monday of rest and a central Adelaide tour on the Tuesday served to prepare the morris fleet leaving Wednesday for Melbourne. The fleet, via some Halls Gap demonstrations of morris, natural history and topography, arrived Friday at Daylesford's oddly named Boomerang Ranch for local shenanigans over the weekend. This culminated in a gig for all at the Melbourne "Ship builder's Yard" from which the sides scattered to the four winds.
- Dancing for Mayday 2013 at daybreak in the City Centre, and again in 2014 which dovetailed neatly with a great weekend at Britannia's Kellybrook Cider Festival in Melbourne.
- Dancing at the English ale for our yearly dose of pagan parades and fire risk.
- A few fundraisers, in March and October, of theatre performances by the Stirling Players and a quiz night in June, to raise a bit of capital for items including the upcoming UK tour.
- August saw the Barrel of Rum Tour at which we saluted the tall ships from the dockside as the other side was a bit wet.
- September - we raised a metaphoric glass to the concept of physical fitness by our sympathetic dancing along the route of the City to Bay Fun Run (the latter still an oxymoron to some).
- October - We danced for the fifth time under canvas on a great timber floor, down south at the Fleurieu Folk Festival, with a button box bash at the 'English session' at lunch.
- November - we kicked up some Yuletide cheer in the Port, Norwood and Blackwood Christmas

parades with a thorough workout by processing the entire parades, (plus a return trip along the course for Norwood). Sadly, later that month, we danced to farewell a past member dancer/muso at the funeral for Tom Freeth. The passing of time was further underlined by our mid-December Christmas break-up (already!?) at Bernard's place in Bridgewater in the Adelaide Hills. Cheer was restored by topping up on our dancing requirements to make it through the break until practice resumed in January.

- Into 2014 and organisation of our tour to the northern UK in 2015 has continued at a satisfactory pace this year in the form of meetings every few months or so. We have refined our aims and are now pursuing input from sides that we wish to see. It is looking as promising as.....something very promising..
- February - we made our fourth appearance entertaining the crowds at the All British Day annual car show. Notable as the only Morris group attending that danced, our efforts required frequent refuelling and the day included the inevitable photo-pun of the side draped across a Morris Minor.
- March - Swan Hill and we again graced the streets of the pioneer settlement and Sunday market with what has been loosely described as our "heritage" presence, or something to that effect.
- May - We welcomed a new chum on board, name of Oliver, of inspirational enthusiasm and reassuring ability. From what has been described as one of the quietest AGMs in living memory our Bag and Foreman have changed to, respectively, Dave (the Rave) Smith and Mike (Twerker) James.
- June— We danced our support for the Fleurieu Folk Festival stand along the virginal Southern Expressway on a river of pristine bitumen! Of a number of brewery visits this year our favourite, and frequent, destination is the Brew Boys fine establishment, our last visit a few weeks ago for a dance, BBQ and drink(s). If you are ever in Adelaide keep an eye out for the great beers from Simon, kegs of which helped make our Ring Meeting great.

"That's enough for now" the editors intone so, if you're inclined, further details of these events and more are available on our website and/or Facebook page or...

Roger Bux



JAYDEN'S MOST EXCELLENT OVERSEAS ADVENTURES

PART ONE: A U.S. MIDWESTERN ALE

I recently had the pleasure of dancing with a large portion of the American Morris community at the 2014 Midwest Morris Ale. It was an impressive gathering, with 200 Morris dancers registered for the weekend (apparently in previous years they have had over 300, with famous visits by the likes of the Adderbury Morris Men).

The event was held in Madison, Wisconsin, which is an area full of wonderful scenery and a thriving craft beer scene — making it a good site for a Morris tour. Highlights of the tour included visiting a charming ghost town which used to be the local tavern and brothel hotspot in the mining days, dancing on a plane which was apparently famous because Farrah Fawcett was on it once, and dancing in a pub with knives and forks in lieu of sticks. For the final stop of the tour we were confined to an area appropriately cordoned off by crime scene tape. But despite the effort to prevent us polluting the rest of the park, we tore through the tape and danced 'Bonny Green Garters' into the nearby lake, followed by a vigorous rendition of 'Flowers of Edinburgh' in the water. We were drenched from our bells to our baldrics, but to the disappointment of the audience, none of us drowned.



There were many kegs of locally crafted beer floating around which I amply sampled throughout the weekend. Somewhat disturbingly, however, almost all of the other dancers remained quite sober. The only keg that needed to be changed regularly was the root beer keg. Although 'The Old Dun Cow' was sung more than once over the weekend, not one person got even close to being blue-blind paralytic drunk. There were no teacups full of whiskey, no flagons of port being

thrown around, no improvised moonshine being sampled, no one passed out on barbed wire fences, and (as far as I'm aware) no one vomited in their tent.

Despite the unsettling level of responsible drinking, everyone managed to have a good deal of fun. The dancing and singing continued until dawn each night, and Sunday morning featured some fine whiskey tasting to get the day going. The last night of the Ale also featured an enjoyable skit night, which featured a series of acrobatic accordion tricks, dirty songs, and a few long sword dances which used the aid of a power drill and welding equipment to achieve the lock at the end of the dance.

I was also struck by the range of age groups represented at the Ale, which I think ranged from roughly six to eighty-six years old. Almost every side seemed to have at least one member who was still in school, and I believe one side was made up entirely of people under twenty. There were several members, now in their mid-twenties, who had been Morris dancing since the age of six, and had tattoos of bells on their legs to celebrate their irreversibly corrupted childhoods. Basically, the U.S. scene doesn't show any signs of dying out any time soon.

All in all, despite their relative sobriety and their lack of crude immaturity, the Morris in the U.S. were a delight to dance

Jayden's Most Excellent Overseas Adventures cont...

with. There were some fantastic dancers and great teams over the weekend. Special mentions go to Braintrust, who dance some of the best Longborough I've seen (despite being scattered across the country and only practicing twice a year); and Ramseys Braggarts, whose musos play at a pace that makes the Adelaide Morris Men sound like speed metal, and who caper so high that they are often in danger of going into

orbit (their proud motto is 'if you have time to spare, spend it in the air').

The next Midwest Morris Ale is in Chicago during May next year. Who's keen?

Jayden Spillane
Black Joak

COME ALONG TO OUR TENTH BIRTHDAY PARTY!

8 November 2014

A walking/dancing/singing tour of the many sights and smells of Sydney's Inner West including a beer tasting and tour at the Young Henry's Brewery
www.younghenrys.com



Price to be confirmed in September, but will be very low.
Will include some drinks at each pub and the cost of the tasting and tour.

Organise your own accommodation and transport.

Recommendations within walking distance can be provided. All stops close to plentiful public transport.

Indicate your interest ASAP to black.joak.ale@gmail.com

SQUIRE'S REPORT cont...

to getting Guerrilla Mumming up and running on and off-site.

Finally, on a more serious note, I've been concerned for some time at the growing impact of Health and Safety legislation and its possible application to the Morris, particularly for public events. The potential for even vicarious liability for accidents means that we all need

to start looking at a risk analysis of what we do, where and when and I can only see this becoming increasingly important as we apply for, for example, busking permits or festival displays. Nigel Edwards (Britannia) who is qualified in this area has kindly agreed to have a look at it for us.

May all your lines be straight!

Tim



CONTACTING THE AMR!



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groups.yahoo.com/group/oz_morris

Facebook:
www.facebook.com/group

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MINUTES OF THE 2014 AUSTRALIAN MORRIS RING

The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Australian Morris Ring (Incorporated) (AMR) for 2014 was held on the 20th of April at 6:10pm in the Acoustic Lounge at the National Folk Festival, EPIC, Canberra ACT.

With the presence of the Ring Squire, Steve Mansfield, and Ring Bag, Natalie Rolfe quorum was reached.

The side representatives present at the Annual general meeting (AGM) Were;

Adelaide Morris Men	Rachael Neild
Albion Fair	Russel Neal
Bellswagger	Daniel Townley
Black Joak	Jayden Spillane
Brandragon	Nat James
Britannia Morris Men	David Purdue
Dance Kaleidoscope	Sheree Greenhill
Hedgemonkey	Rachael Massey
Hot For Joe	Rachael Massey
Jolley Hatters	Trish Williams
Lancashire Witches	Rachael Neild
Mad Tatters Morris	Christine Hogan
Perth Morris Men	Steve Mansfield
Ragged Band	Ati Bryan
Red Raven	Lindsay Hamilton
SENW	Ati Bryan
Surly Griffins	Simon Wall
Tylers Oz	David Purdue

Apologies were received from Graeme Hamilton of Red Raven.

1. SQUIRES WELCOME

Steve Mansfield gives the Squire's welcome to all representatives and Morris dancers present.

IN MEMORIAM

The AMR notes the sad passing of;

- Alan Sisley of Black Joak Morris, Sydney Morris Men and Canberra Morris Men
- Tom Freeth of the Adelaide Morris Men
- Patricia Early from the Sydney folk scene

- Peter Auty of Moreton Bay Morris

2. REVIEW OF 2013 ACTION ITEMS

ACTION ITEM: Register of change of Constitution with WA.

ACTION ITEM: Change of bank account

ACTION ITEM: National Ale 2014

ACTION ITEM: Insurance and Membership discussion

3. CALL FOR OTHER BUSINESS

Daniel Townley of Belswagger Morris proposes limit times for discussing new business at the AGM in order to increase the meetings efficiency.

4. REPORTS

Steve Mansfield gives the 2013-2014 Squire's Report.

The minutes of the previous AMR AGM were accepted.

Looking back on the past year there has been quite a few momentous occasions - to quote a few that I know of or attended:

- English Morris Ring meeting involving the visit of a number of English sides to Adelaide and its subsequent extension down to Melbourne by those who could. Held a week after the NFF last year.
- Black Joak's 1st Ale (Black Orange Ale) in mid July last year.
- SENW 5th Birthday Ale – November 16th last year.
- NZ Morris Tour in Nelson was attended one whole side (Surly Griffins) and representatives of six other Australian sides.
- Hay Street Perth Morris Men's 40th Anniversary Stand – 8th of March

Steve - Other comments

Whilst compiling this report I looked at last year and also Stephanie's Squire Report. Previous suggestions of expanding the executive got off to a good start when Danika volunteered to be Newsletter Editor. Unfortunately a Newsletter didn't eventuate. Amongst other things that prevented this was the lack of any input from many of the

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

sides (apart from Perth). So if we do want a Newsletter and we are fortunate enough to have a volunteer for the position – a bit of input from the sides will definitely help.

As I previously stated in an email my resignation from the AMR Squire position is partly due to my involvement as Squire of the Perth Morris Men. I wouldn't want to discourage anyone from volunteering for anything but it is probably preferable to have a single focus. It is far too easy to concentrate on or be distracted by local side issues and more immediate local problems in a busy dancing year.

The Vote about insurance coverage of small sides was conducted.

One task that we discussed and that Nat has prepared a survey for is to do with the way we communicate. Some are on Facebook and are members of the AMR Group others are on the Yahoo Group What is the best/easiest way to get a message across to all Morris persons?

Lastly I would like to thank Nat who not only does a wonderful job in her role as Bag but also provided lots of guidance as to what I needed to do and by when. Due partly to the fact that she has been Bag for a number of years now; she has a wealth of knowledge to offer as to the running of the AMR.

MOTION: Nat Rolfe moves to accept the Squires Report,
Daniel Townley Seconds.
Motion passed.

Nat Rolfe gives the 2013-2014 Bag's Report

New Sides to the Ring are: Black Fox of Adelaide (SA)
Colin Towns (Individual)

And new associate members are: City of Auckland Morris (NZ)
Nelson Morris (NZ)

During the year we established a Bendigo Bank account for the ring. However we have been unable to close the Commonwealth Bank account because we need AGM minutes that say we can close the account

After the discussion from last year's AGM, a vote was held in regards to different insurance charges and membership levels. The vote came out overwhelmingly in favour of keeping the status quo. Special events will continue to be covered by insurance with the agreement of the 'home' sides of those participating.

Issues with the yahoo group mailing list have arisen. We can't add new members due to a change of moderator and a loss of privileges. The owner is no longer a regular Morris participant which has meant we haven't been able to get in contact with them. As a result of this, I've started work on a project to overhaul the communication apparatus for the AMR. A survey will be sent out in the coming months to gather information about the expectations of the members in regards to what they want from the AMR and the best way to foster communication within the Morris community.

Nat would like to thank;

Steve for his work as Ring Squire,

Dave Purdue and Kim Brown for maintaining the website
Dave Smith for storing the AMRs archives.

Nat James for being signatory for the bank account.

Judy Eliot and Black Joak for their hospitality and for hosting tonight's Ale.

Justin Presser for getting the booze for the Ale.

Everyone who came to the NFF and danced and made it a great weekend.

MOTION: Steve Mansfield moves to accept the Bag Report,
Jayden Spillane seconds,
Motion passed.

Details of the Financial report (accounting) and details of member sides insurance can be found in tables 1 & 2 at the end of the minutes.

5. ORDINARY BUSINESS

Special Resolution 1 - Constitution Change

Nat Rolfe explains that as a requirement of the AMR's incorporation in WA, in the event of the closing of the Ring all remaining moneys are not allowed to go to a charity but must be transferred to the next morris entity, if such a thing exists.

VOTE: Called by Nat Rolfe;

To remove Clause 22(2) of the constitution which reads '(2) If no such association exists, the surplus property may be distributed for charitable purposes, which shall be determined by resolution of the members.'

RESULT: All ayes - Passed

Special Resolution 2 - Constitution Change

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

VOTE: Called by Nat Rolfe;

To amend Clause 22 of the constitution to read

'If upon the winding up or dissolution of the Association there remains after satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities any property whatsoever, the same must not be paid to or distributed among the members, or former members. The surplus property must be given or transferred to another association incorporated under the Act which has similar objects and which is not carried out for the purposes of profit or gain to its individual members, and which association shall be determined by resolution of the members.'

RESULT: All ayes – Passed.

Special Resolution 3 Constitution Change

VOTE: Called by Nat Rolfe;

To add to Clause 9 of the constitution to read

'(12) The Chairperson, or at least half the members of the Executive, may at any time convene a meeting of the Executive.

(a) this meeting may take place via phone, internet or conference call.

(b) sixty (60 days) notice must be given for an in person meeting.

(c) Each Executive member has a deliberative vote.

(d) A question arising at an Executive meeting must be decided by a majority of votes, but, if there no majority, the person presiding at the Executive meeting will have a casting vote in addition to his or her deliberative vote.

(e) At an Executive meeting the Squire and the Bag constitute a quorum.

(f) Subject to these rules, the procedure and order of business to be followed at a Executive meeting must be determined by the Executive members present at the Executive meeting.

(g) As required under sections 21 and 22 of the Act, a Executive member having any direct or indirect pecuniary interest in a contract, or proposed contract, made by, or in the contemplation of, the Executive (except if that pecuniary interest exists only by virtue of the fact that the member of the Executive is a member of a class of persons for whose benefit the Association is established), must-

(i) as soon as he or she becomes aware of that interest, disclose the nature and extent of his or her interest to the Executive; and

(ii) not take part in any deliberations or decision of the Executive with respect to that contract.

(h) Sub-rule (g) (i) does not apply with respect to a pecuniary interest that exists only by virtue of the fact that the member of the Executive is an employee of the Association.

(8) The Chairperson must cause every disclosure made under sub-rule (g) (i) by a member of the Executive to be recorded in the minutes of the meeting of the Executive at which it is made.'

Question

Ian Redpath -Who are the Execs?

Nat Rolfe -The Squire and Bag can appoint members to an executive committee , but Squire & Bag constitute the whole of the executive members

RESULT: All ayes – Passed

Changing Bank Accounts.

MOTION: Nat Rolfe moves that the Commonwealth Bank account be closed and for all funds to be moved to a Bendigo bank account.

Nat James, Nat Rolfe and Tim Beckett are proposed to be the signatories.

Kevan Jones seconds.

Motion passed.

National Ale 2015

Circumstances have conspired to scuttle plans for a Mega Ale this year.

Tim Beckett & Nat Rolfe will organize the organization of a National Ale for 2015 to be performed by members of various sides.

Queensland was suggested as the location for the 2015 National Ale.

It was generally agreed that every second year was a good frequency to hold the National Ale.

Steve Mansfield – Spruiks the Perth Morris men's 40th Anniversary Ale for a bit, enticing people with the Stables Bar, Swan Valley vineyards and King's Park.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

6. ELECTIONS

Vacation of Executive Positions

The Ring Squire and Ring Bag step down.

Ordinary Resolution 1 - Election of the Squire

Simon Wall nominates Tim Beckett of the Surly Griffins.

Lindsay Hamilton seconds.

Tim Beckett accepts the position of Ring Squire.

And there was much rejoicing.

Ordinary Resolution 2 - Election of the Bag

Lindsay Hamilton nominates Nat Rolfe.

Ati Bryan seconds.

Nat Rolfe accepts the position of Ring Bag.

And there was much rejoicing.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

Efficiency Proposal

Daniel Townley suggests limiting the time to discuss new business at AMR AGMs to 5 minutes, and responses to three minutes.

Kevan Walter Jones seconds

Nat Rolfe – Likes the idea because Judy's food is waiting and she would rather be eating and drinking the food than discussing guideline policy documents.

David Purdue – Suggests that the final decisions on new business brought up at AMR AGMs be put to a vote at a later date, so that all interested parties get to consider and debate the business first.

Morris Communication/ The Role of the Archivist

Nat Rolfe's pet peeve is the inefficiency of Morris communication and proposes that we need;

A new mailing list.

A newsletter, a better one.

Ian Redpath – Notes that the newsletter failed.

Nat Rolfe – Retorts that the editor was sick.

Tim Beckett – Stephanie Swanson has mentioned that she is interested in being editor of the newsletter again.

Nat Rolfe -- The Ring website needs to be made more accessible, Some information is available on Morris wikis, but the Website needs updating, (while Kim is thanked for his efforts). I'm confident that a lot of work can be done since we have lots of passionate members.

Ian Redpath – Asks if anyone knows what the Archivist is doing? And would like a copy of the Bacon available online.

Simon Wall - Asks if we can have submissions from community members be put into the archives.

Someone – Dave Smith wants to know what people want to know from the Archives.

Nat Rolf – Would like a historical list of all AMR Squires & Bags

Someone – Demands accessibility and claims that Dave Smith thinks his job is to just keep the records on a shelf.

Rachael Neild – Defends Dave and mentions that he has been recording Adelaide Morris events for the archives.

Di James – Claims that there had been disagreements about what the role of the Archivist was before.

Simon Wall - The New Zealand Morris sides have a Kit archive, and we should get one of those.

Rachael Neild – Adelaide has had some kit in a library/ museum for a few weeks?

Nat Rolfe – We should have a discussion during the year about how the Archive should be organized and what the role of the Archivist should be.

Daniel Townley – We should have a Ring historian as well.

Nat Rolfe – Yes, that would be nice, the ring could do with more help, that is always welcome.

Tom Davis – One of the Perth men is writing a history of the Perth Morris Men.

Christine Hogan – Mad Tatters are recording a Yearbook.

Nat Rolfe – Red Raven record everything at their practices, including who danced which dances.

Something Else?

David Purdue – Asks if the Ring needs a residential member in WA since we are incorporated there. If so, he would be happy to be that member.

Someone – Thanks Steve and Nat for all their hard work.

Steve and Nat – Thank you, it was our pleasure.

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NFF Contact

Changes have been made to the way that the NFF contacts the AMR, there are now six points of contact.

There is also a new artistic director for the NFF (Pam) who is not as friendly to the Morris as the previous one was. So we will have to prove how excellent Morris is.

Someone – But we won circus Vs Morris.

Nat Rolfe – Yes, that’s true.

Ati Bryan – I’ll get a copy of the video into the archives.

Marcus Ditzel – So, what do people want the Archivist to do?

Everyone – Later!

Nat - ...something about finishing...

David Purdue – How much booze is there?

Justin – Lots

David Purdue – No further Questions.

Nat & Steve – Second that motion.

Meeting Closes at 7:20pm

And there was much rejoicing.

p.s. The Mad Tatters have won an award from the city of Swan for services rendered to the community.

Supplementary Data;

AMR FINANCIAL REPORT 2014			
Bank balance as of April 15 2014:			8495.49
	Commonwealth Bank		\$8,030.49
	Bendigo Bank		\$ 465.00
EXPENSES			
INSURANCE			
	30/10/2013	Public liability & general property	\$2,665.00
	02/04/2014	Personal injury	\$1,081.08
SUBTOTAL			\$3,746.08

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OPERATIONAL COSTS		
24/04/2013	Ale booze (Natalie Rolfe)	\$ 252.00
11/06/2013	Admin fees	\$ 22.10
	Bank fees	\$ 120.00
SUBTOTAL		\$ 394.10

NFF 2013		
09/04/2013	Tylers	\$ 550.00
	Adelaide Morris Men	\$ 550.00
	Surly Griffens	\$ 550.00
	Albion Fair	\$ 350.00
	Ragged Band	\$ 350.00
	Perth Morris Men	\$ 350.00
SUBTOTAL		\$ 2,700.00
TOTAL:		\$ 6,840.18

INCOME		
	Insurance (17 sides, 1 individual member)	\$ 4,950.00
	Membership (20 sides, 2 associate sides, 1 individual)	\$ 445.00
	NFF 2013 payment	\$2,700.00
TOTAL		\$8,095.00

Table 1. Financial report for 2014

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Membership	Side	Insurance
Yes	Adelaide MM	Yes
Yes	Albion Fair	Yes
Yes	Belswagger	Yes
Yes	Black Fox	No cost
Yes	Black Joak	Yes
Yes	Brandragon	Yes
Yes	Britannia MM	Yes
Yes	Dance Kaleidoscope	Yes
Yes	Hedgemonkey	Yes
Yes	Hot for Joe	Yes
Yes	Jolley Hatters	Yes
Yes	Lancashire Witches	Periodic payments
Yes	Mad Tatters Morris	Yes
Yes	Perth MM	Yes
Yes	Ragged Band Border Morris	Yes
Yes	Red Raven	Yes
Yes	SENW	Yes
Yes	Surly Griffins	Yes
Yes	Tyler's Oz	No
Yes	Longford	No
Yes	Colin Towns	Yes
Yes	City of Auckland Morris Men	No
Yes	Nelson Morris	No
Total number of members for insurance purposes:		355.

Table 2. Details of member sides insurance.

Glossary for Bankers who may happen to read this document: The Ring: The organization
 Squire: The head of the Ring, Chairperson
 Bag: The Treasurer



MORRIS