

Who are the Devil's Dyke Morris Men?

We have been entertaining people in and around the Newmarket and Cambridge area since 1981. The side takes its name from the Devil's Dyke, an impressive earthwork which stretches seven miles from Woodditton to Reach. It was built in the Dark Ages, during the 6th or 7th century, to keep out marauding Mercians.

We present our dances in public during the spring and summer as an affirmation of the English tradition of music and dance which we hope you too will value and enjoy.

Tell me about the dances you do

The Devil's Dyke Morris Men mainly perform dances which were first recorded in the Cotswold area. The term 'Morris' generally describes dances with a formal or ritual function, traditionally performed by a small practised set of same-sex dancers, usually male. This contrasted strongly with social dances which were performed in more relaxed circumstances by both sexes.

The Cotswold Morris is characterised by a mixture of dances with either handkerchiefs or sticks. We call dance styles by the names of the villages in which they were collected, and so you may hear us announce a dance 'from Fieldtown' or 'in the style of Bledington'.

Each village style has its own characteristics, but there are also very many dance figures, steps and movements common to all of them. Devil's Dyke try to maintain a high standard of dance and keep the styles distinct as best we can.

Could you dance at my upcoming event?

We are always happy to consider paid or charitable events. Because we all have other commitments some notice is usually required, but if you think our dancing would enhance your event, please talk to the bagman, Nigel Strudwick, on 01223 207434, or send email to bagman@devilsdykem.org.uk.

What's the history of the Morris?

Morris dancing certainly goes back to late mediaeval times—it is first mentioned in 1458. We don't know what the name means, nor do we understand how or where it started. Many early records relate to performances at the royal court and in major towns. Out in the country, the Church supported it for many years, but it fell out of favour with the bishops after the Reformation, and only re-established itself in the 18th century, mostly in rural areas. By the end of the 19th century the Morris had become unfashionable, and almost died out. Dance collector Cecil Sharp saw the Morris on Boxing Day 1899 and began the present revival.

Why dance the Morris?

Primarily because it is fun! It is an excellent method of exercise, as you may notice from the men's faces at the end of a vigorous dance, and we visit many lovely spots at the best time of the year, and enjoy a thriving social scene. Equally important, however, is the feeling that we are preserving part of our culture. The Morris has survived for more than five hundred years, and we hope to pass it on to future generations.



DEVIL'S DYKE MORRIS MEN 2011



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Lizzy Doe 2010 (<http://www.lizzydoe.co.uk/>)





We are recruiting now!

Like most things taking part is much more enjoyable than looking on. So, if you have enjoyed watching us, why not join us? It's probably the most fun you can have standing up!

The Morris needs dancers as well as spectators. There's been a lot of media attention recently about the survival of the dance, so help preserve a great English tradition!

We always welcome new members. All you need is basic fitness and commitment. There is no charge. We practise every Thursday night from October to April from 8:00 to 10:00 pm in Fen Ditton Community Primary School, usually followed by suitable liquid refreshment. Join us and by the next May Day you could be dancing!

If you are interested please talk to one of the men, or ring Nigel Strudwick on 01223 207434. You could also visit our web site: www.devilsdykemm.org.uk



Where can we watch you?

MARCH

Sunday 27th Thriplow Daffodil 12:30 pm

APRIL

Monday 25th Thaxted, Bull Ring 11:00 am

DDMM are guests of Thaxted Morris Men

MAY

Sunday 1st Wandlebury 5:20 am

Monday 2nd Commercial End 11:00 am

Reach Fair 1:00 pm onwards

Thursday 5th Great Abington, *Three Tuns* 8:00 pm

Thursday 12th Ely, *Cutter* 7:30 pm

Ely, *Fountain* 8:30 pm

Thursday 19th Newton, *Queen's Head* 7:30 pm

Harlton, *Hare & Hounds* 8:30 pm

Thursday 26th Croydon, *Queen Adelaide* 7:45 pm

Orwell, *Chequers* 8:45 pm

JUNE

Thursday 2nd Dalham, *Affleck Arms* 7:45 pm

Ashley, *Crown* 8:45 pm

Sunday 5th Cambridge Show, Wimpole 1:30 pm

Thursday 9th Reach, *Dyke's End* 7:45 pm

Upware,

Five Miles from Anywhere 8:45 pm

Saturday 11th Linton, St Mary's Flower Festival

about 1:30 pm

Sunday 12th Whaddon Whitsun Celebration

10:30 am

Thursday 16th Thirfield, *Fox and Duck* 8:15 pm

Royston, *Old Bull Inn* 9:15 pm

DDMM are guests of Standon Morris Men

Thursday 23rd Burrough Green, *Bull* 7:45 pm

Carlton, War Memorial 8:15 pm

West Wrattling,

Chestnut Tree 9:00 pm

Thursday 30th Woodditton,

Three Blackbirds 7:45 pm

Dullingham, *Boot* 8:45 pm

JULY

Thursday 7th Chippenham, *Tharp Arms* 7:45 pm

Snailwell, *George & Dragon* 8:45 pm

Saturday 9th– Ely Folk Festival To be

Sunday 10th confirmed

Thursday 14th Cowlinge, *Three Tuns* 7:45 pm

Great Wrattling, *Red Lion* 8:45 pm

Thursday 21st Hildersham, *Pear Tree* 8:00 pm

Friday 22nd– Rutland Ring Meeting

Sunday 24th

Thursday 28th Swaffham Bulbeck,

Black Horse 7:45 pm

Burwell, *Fox* 8:45 pm

AUGUST

Friday 19th– Saddleworth Rushcart

Sunday 21st

Monday 29th Annual tour of Southwold

We make every effort to stick to the programme, but circumstances may force changes to it. If you want to check, please ring Nigel Strudwick on 01223 207434, or check our web site.

www.devilsdykemm.org.uk

This year we are supporting

Headway Cambridgeshire



Headway Cambridgeshire provides information and support to brain injury survivors and their families to help them understand the effects of brain injury and to provide support and strategies for dealing with the effects from the moment of traumatic brain injury right up to recovery and rehabilitation in the East of England.

For further information please look at our web-site

www.headway-cambs.org.uk

or contact Karen Bevan on 07919 373464.