

## Tell me about the dances you do

Devil's Dyke Morris Men mainly perform dances which were first recorded in the Cotswold area. 'Morris' generally describes dances with a formal or ritual function, which were 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. So when you hear us announce a dance 'from Fieldtown' or 'in the style of Bledington', that is what we are referring to.

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 separate as best we can.

## I have an event coming up. Could you dance for me?

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, Tony Kelly, on 01223 892553.

[www.devilsdykemmm.org.uk](http://www.devilsdykemmm.org.uk)

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## 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 an important part of our culture. The Morris has survived for more than five hundred years, and we hope to pass it on to future generations.

## Would you like to be a Morris Man?

Like most things taking part is much more enjoyable than looking on. So, if you have enjoyed watching us, why not join us?

The Morris needs dancers as well as spectators. We always welcome new members. No experience is necessary and any age qualifies. 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 10.00pm in the Scout Hall, High Street Bottisham, usually followed by refreshment at our home pub, the Carpenter's Arms, Great Wilbraham. 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 Tony Kelly on 01223 892553. You could also visit our web-site:

[www.devilsdykemmm.org.uk](http://www.devilsdykemmm.org.uk)

# The Devil's Dyke Morris Men



Programme 2008

## Who are the Devil's Dyke Morris Men?

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. The Devil's Dyke Morris Men have been entertaining people in and around the Newmarket and Cambridge area since 1981.

In 2006 we celebrated the side's twenty-fifth anniversary with a number of special events and we hope very much that the Devil's Dyke Morris Men will be around for many more years to continue our commitment to the traditions of morris dancing.

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.

## 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. It only re-established itself in the 18th century, and then mostly in rural areas. However, by the end of the 19th century the Morris had become rather unfashionable, and almost died out completely. By good fortune, on Boxing Day 1899 the folk song and dance collector Cecil Sharp happened to see the Morris being performed and he started the revival, now in its second century.

## Where can we watch you?

### APRIL

Sunday 13th Thriplow Daffodil W/E 12:30 pm

### MAY

Thursday 1st Wandlebury 5:20 am

Monday 5th Commercial End 11:15 am  
Reach Fair 1:00 pm onwards

Thursday 8th Wicken, *Maid's Head* 7:30 pm

Freckenham, *Golden Boar* 8:30 pm

Sunday 11th Whaddon, Whitsun Event 10:30 am

Thursday 15th Linton, *Dog & Duck* 7:30 pm

Hadstock, *King's Head* 8:30 pm

Thursday 22nd Outside the Church,

Fulbourn 7:30 pm

Great Wilbraham,

*Carpenter's Arms* 8:30 pm

Thursday 29th Burwell, *Five Bells* 7:30 pm

Reach, *Dyke's End* 8:30 pm

*with guests Cambridge Morris Men.*

### JUNE

Sunday 1st Cambridge County Show  
Wimpole Hall 2:30 pm

Thursday 5th Lidgate, *Star* 7:45 pm

Dalham, *Affleck Arms* 8:45 pm

Thursday 12th Ely, by the river 7:45 pm

Ely, *Fountain* 8:45 pm

Thursday 19th Burrough Green, *Bull* 7:45 pm

Carlton, War Memorial 8:30 pm

West Watting,

*Chestnut Tree* 9:15 pm

Thursday 26th Steeple Morden,

*Wagon and Horses* 8:15 pm

Abington Piggotts,

*Pig and Abbot* 9:15 pm

*guests of Letchworth Morris Men.*

Friday 27th Milton Golf Club,  
Beer Festival 7 pm

### JULY

Thursday 3rd Arrington, *Hardwicke Arms* 7:45 pm

Longstowe, *The Red House* 8:45 pm

*with guests Standon Morris Men.*

Thursday 10th Chippenham, *Tharp Arms* 7:45 pm

Snailwell, *George & Dragon* 8:45 pm

Thursday 17th Cowlinge, *Three Tuns* 7:45 pm

Great Watting, *Red Lion* 8:45 pm

Thursday 24th Wood Ditton,

*Three Blackbirds* 7:45 pm

Dullingham, *Boot* 8:45 pm

Thursday 31st Great Abington,

*Three Tuns* 7:45 pm

Hildersham, *Pear Tree* 8:45 pm

### AUGUST

Monday 25th 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, do please ring Tony Kelly on 01223 892553, or check our web site.

[www.devilsdykemmen.org.uk](http://www.devilsdykemmen.org.uk)

This year, we are supporting

### Cambridge Dial-a-Ride



Cambridge Dial-a-Ride provides a community transport service in the City of Cambridge and its surrounding villages for persons who have special need for such facilities because they are elderly, sick, disabled, poor, or living in isolated areas, where there is no adequate public transport facility.

Cambridge Dial-a-Ride can be contacted by telephone on 01223-506335 or by fax on 01223-506334.