

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.

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.

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.



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, Nigel Strudwick, on 01223 207434.

www.devilsdykemm.org.uk

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Front cover picture: Whaddon Churchyard, Whitsun 2009. This page: Ely, *The Cutter*, June 2009.

The Devil's Dyke Morris Men



Programme 2010

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. 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. 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 10:00 pm in the Youth Centre, High Street Bottisham, 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 21st	Thriplow Daffodil	12:30 pm
APRIL		
Monday 5th	Thaxted, Bull Ring	11:00 am
<i>DDMM are guests of Thaxted Morris Men</i>		
MAY		
Saturday 1st	Wandlebury	5:20 am
Monday 3rd	Commercial End	11:00 am
	Reach Fair	1:00 pm onwards
Thursday 6th	Stetchworth, <i>Marquis of Granby</i>	7:30 pm
	Dullingham, <i>Boot</i>	8:30 pm
Thursday 13th	Linton, <i>Dog & Duck</i>	7:30 pm
	Hildersham, <i>Pear Tree</i>	8:30 pm
Thursday 20th	Upware, <i>Five Miles from Anywhere</i>	7:30 pm
	Wicken, <i>Maid's Head</i>	8:30 pm
Sunday 23rd	Whaddon Whitsun Celebration	10:30 am
Thursday 27th	Newton, <i>Queen's Head</i>	7:30 pm
	Harlton, <i>Hare & Hounds</i>	8:30 pm
JUNE		
Thursday 3rd	Reach, <i>Dyke's End</i>	7:45 pm
	Burwell, <i>Fox</i>	8:45 pm
Sunday 6th	Cambridge Show, Wimpole	1:30 pm
Thursday 10th	Ashley, <i>Crown</i>	7:45 pm
	Dalham, <i>Affleck Arms</i>	8:45 pm
Thursday 17th	Fen Ditton, <i>Plough</i>	7:45 pm
	Clayhithe, <i>Bridge</i>	8:45 pm
Thursday 24th	Burrough Green, <i>Bull</i>	7:45 pm
	Carlton, War Memorial	8:15 pm
	West Wrattling, <i>Chestnut Tree</i>	9:00 pm

JULY

Thursday 1st	Croydon, <i>Queen Adelaide</i>	8:00 pm
	Orwell, <i>Chequers</i>	9:00 pm
<i>With guests Standon Morris Men</i>		
Thursday 8th	Chippenham, <i>Tharp Arms</i>	7:45 pm
	Snailwell, <i>George & Dragon</i>	8:45 pm
Thursday 15th	Great Abington, <i>Three Tuns</i>	7:45 pm
	Pampisford, <i>Chequers</i>	8:45 pm
<i>With guests Milton Morris Men</i>		
Thursday 22nd	Ely, <i>Cutter</i>	7:45 pm
	Ely, <i>Fountain</i>	8:45 pm
Thursday 29th	Cowlinge, <i>Three Tuns</i>	7:45 pm
	Great Wrattling, <i>Red Lion</i>	8:45 pm

AUGUST

Monday 30th 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 Nigel Strudwick on 01223 207434, or check our web site.

www.devilsdykemm.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 difficulty accessing public transport because of age, infirmity, or disability.

Cambridge Dial-a-Ride can be contacted by telephone on 01223 506335 or by e-mail at camdar05@hotmail.co.uk.

www.colc.co.uk/cambridge/dialaride