

## CHAPTER EIGHT

1975 – Assets include a filing cabinet and Terry Paling!

1975 is a bit of a mystery. There is a list of Thursday night pub tours but not much other information about the year's events. Fourteen pub tours were organised but the usual starting point of The White Lion Bramcote was replaced with a trip to The Maypole at Wilford. The final tour of the season took place on 24<sup>th</sup> July 1975 and the last pub was The Malt Shovel at Shardlow, which used to be a great pub to visit at any time and for any reason.

Leicester Morris Men's annual feast night took place on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January 1975 and the handwritten note on the invitation letter shows that thirteen men, not including Bert Cleaver, were booked in. Another handwritten note from Roger Grimes, the Leicester Morris bagman indicated that ten of their men would attend the Dolphin Feast but no other information exists as to where it was held or on what date? Both notes are in the Dolphin archive.

Dolphin appear to have made a return visit to Sherwood Hospital on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 1975 and a handwritten note on the back of a letter in the archive shows that seven Dolphins plus beginners met at The Five Ways pub at 6.30pm prior to the booking.



During the weekend of 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> May 1975 Dolphin were at Market Rasen racecourse for the, 'Hartford on Show 75' event.

Letters in the archive show that the organisers were allowing Dolphin to pass around the collection box. They agreed to make the collection up to £65 in the event of any shortfall.

There was a shortfall of £15 which was caused by Dolphin being asked to dance at other than, 'our usual haunts'.

John Whitelaw says, 'I seem to remember something about people being told that everything was 'free' by which the [Lincolnshire] yellow bellies took to include the Morris'.

Terry Paling recalls, 'It was run by Hartford Motors (Lincolnshire) Ltd a Ford car franchise. We danced in the middle of the racecourse about two miles from the crowd!

The highlight was a sky-dive by some

gorillas that had kidnapped a wench and Dolphin were designated to save her. This we

*set out to do but the wind was so strong that the gorillas landed hundreds of yards away from the target and we had to Bonny Green at 60 mph to get close to them’.*

A dance was organised for the evening of the 10<sup>th</sup> May and Dolphin asked for a further £10 plus free ale to perform.

NTMC newsletter dated 16<sup>th</sup> May 1975 has a Morris mention which reads, *‘MORRIS DANCING...is of course another way that our ancestors invented for celebrating the coming of summer, and our own Dolphin Morris Men are just one of the sides who are keeping that tradition very much alive (incidentally, one of the very old men of the Morris Ring was heard the other week to describe the Dolphin side as ‘a goodish new side’ – or was it a ‘good newish side’? Either way, if you’re not into Morris, that might sound like pretty faint praise...but in fact, in the stiff-upper-lip language of those old Morris Ring men, it’s a compliment indeed. I don’t think you cease being a ‘newish’ side, as far as the Ring is concerned, till you’ve been dancing for about thirty years. Twenty four years to go then. The same newsletter ends with, ‘I’ll end with that joke of Dai Lees’, the classic one about the three Japanese gentlemen in the crematorium...’* that is all there was before space ran out!



Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> June 1975 was the date of the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Sutton Bonington and neighbourhood day of dance. The programme included; Kingston on Soar Village Green, Marle-Pit Hill corner, outside Sutton Bonington Church, outside Mace supermarket, Main Street, The King’s Head, The Paddocks and Gables Lea. Lunch was at The Anchor followed by; The White House and the Station Hotel. From 2.45pm to tea-time the Morris Men will, *‘wander at will through the gardens and streets of Sutton Bonington’.* This last part included a local garden fete.

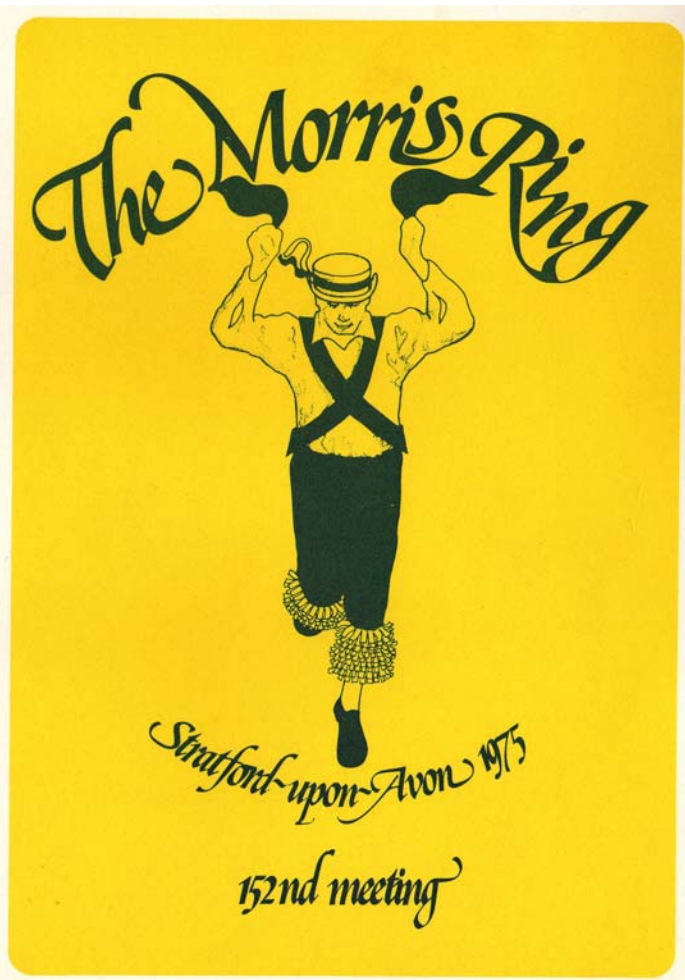
*Left: Here we see Wocko taking pocket money from a local child at Marle-Pit Hill Corner.*

During the evening of June 21<sup>st</sup> there was more dancing at The Plough, Normanton, The Rose and Crown, Zouch, The Kings Arms, Hathern, and The Old Plough, Sutton Bonington.

Dolphin, along with 25 other Morris, Sword and Mummers teams, attended the Ring Meeting at Stratford upon Avon on the weekend of 27<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>. June 1975.

Dolphin booked in for 10 men in hotel accommodation for the princely sum of £12 for the weekend. John Whitelaw looking back says, '*Worst ever meeting and feast. Dancing seemed to go on until late evening. Feast at Stratford Hilton extremely meagre, OK for fat Yanks who'd been sitting on their arses all day but not for lively, virile Morris Men. Two jugs of beer or juice per table (10 men), John Sweeney was not allowed cider, even when he offered to pay, and we were refused permission to visit the bar. Most men left still hungry and a local chippy did a roaring trade. Waved to HM the Queen while standing outside the gents in Bancroft Gardens. Shakespeare men had gone commercial with plenty of merchandising (typical of Stratford) and made a loss running into several hundred pounds. All sides warned by the Ring that this practice must cease forthwith*'.

Terry Paling recalls that, '*Stratford Ring Meeting was where the feast was held in the Hilton Hotel. I think we shared a table or lodgings with Southport Mummers*'.



The Saturday night feast was:

*Smoked Trout*

*Horseradish sauce*

*Consommé Julienne'*

*Suprême de volaille Princesse*

*Broccolis au Beurre*

*Pommes Rissollées*

*Crème Beau Rivage*

*Café*

*Petit Fours*

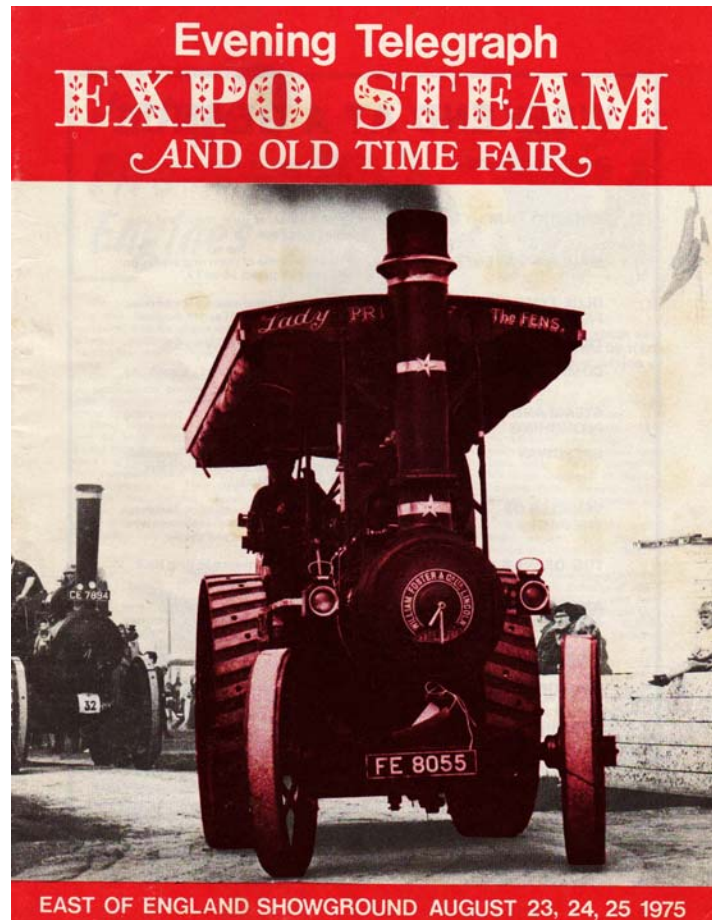
Usual toasts also included 'William Shakespeare' and 'Stratford upon Avon'.

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> July 1975 was International Co-operative Day. The Greater Nottingham Cooperative Society Ltd was holding a reception at the Co-operative Education Centre for 120 people. Dolphin agreed to dance for a fee of £12-£15 plus food. The Member Relations Secretary was under the impression that Dolphin had been attached to the Co-operative Folk Club (Nottingham Co-operative Folk Workshop) at one time. Several members of Dolphin had served on the committee so there was a link.

The following day Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> July 1975 the team had organised a 'Dolphin Day of Dancing in Derbyshire'. The day appears to have followed the pattern adopted in previous years. Bus from The Salutation on Maid Marion Way, Nottingham and travel to the first dance spot at Castleton. This was followed by Hathersage, Baslow, Chatsworth House and Matlock Bath before returning to The Salutation at approximately 7pm.

The Bank Holiday weekend fell on August 23<sup>rd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> 1975 and it was the Expo Steam at The East of England Showground. Dolphin were booked to perform and the small write-up in the programme stated, *'Paying a return visit to Expo team are the Nottingham Dolphin Morris Men, who will perform some of the intriguing routines, collected, in the main from the old men of the Cotswold villages at the turn of the century'*.

The usual format was adopted: three fifteen minute performances each day, a fee of £150 less £25 commission to Norwich Artists Entertainment Agency.



The East of England Showground and the local public houses were the scene of many a Dolphin anecdote. These involved drunken landlords giving change for money that was never tended, lock-in's where the men were left on their own, willing female bar-staff and even more willing Morris Men, drunken revelry etc. Names have been left out to protect those involved, but the legends live on in the memories of those who were there.

Whitchurch Ring Meeting was on the weekend of September 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> 1975 and Dolphin was accepted to attend, the receipt, in the archive, suggests that the team were 'day men' for the Saturday only, but John Whitelaw recalls. *'I feel sure that we stayed in the same village hall at Whitchurch where the feast was held. Literally staggeringly large amounts of superb food provided by the ladies. It was a struggle to dance the next day'*.

The 1975 Annual General Meeting throws up an anomaly as to the date it was held. There is a letter from Terry (Paling) to 'Dear John (Sweeney?)' This letter gives various dates of events and shows the AGM to be at Ian's (Stewart) on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> September, and gives an agenda. There is also a filing card which has 'AGENDA 27-9-75' which was a Saturday and lists the agenda items. The card agenda shows election of officers and the nominations Squire (IS and TH), Bagman (BH and TH), Assistant Bagman (DL and TH), Keeper of Scrapbook (JW and TH), Foreman (IS, JS and TH). It later mentions election of PADRE (Chaplin) and nominations was Rev Ken and, for consistency, TH)... NTMC newsletter dated September 26<sup>th</sup> 1975 gives details about the AGM. The

probability is that September 11th was the date but in previous years the newsletter had reported the AGM the following day at the Friday Club night and so September 25<sup>th</sup> can't be ruled out?

A balance sheet shows that Dolphin held a ladies night (presumed) at Kingston on Soar, and also paid out expenses to Bert Cleaver (presumed for an instructional) but dates and venues are not known. Assets are listed to include; filing cabinet, leather bound Morris Books, fools coat, first aid kit and Terry Paling! The Morris Books are all that remains of that glittering array of treasures!

The NTMC newsletter dated September 26<sup>th</sup> 1975 give details of the 'recent' AGM and shows the following: Ian Stewart became the fourth Squire of the side taking over from Roy Dyson, Terry Paling kept the Bagman's job, John Whitelaw retained the job of '*the picturesquely-named*' Keeper of the Scrapbook.

Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October 1975 was the date for an international evening at Rushcliffe School where Dolphin would represent the English culture! Once again there are no photographs of the event and no details of other cultures represented.

Dolphin preferred to dance and drink beer rather than keep and preserve memorabilia of events attended. Much of what happened exists only in the memories of those that were there.

Information to hand suggests that new members for 1975 included Iain (Jethro) Anderson and Pat Tribensee.

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