

CHAPTER TWENTY

1987 – When dolphin only danced one circuit!

On paper another full year, a full Thursday night tour list covering April 30th to July 30th 1987, and a lot of mentions of events in documents within the archive. In spite of this full itinerary there is not much in the way of photographs or documentary items to comment upon.

From 16th -18th January 1987 The Morris Ring held a Jigs instructional. Hosted by Greensleeves Morris Men the weekend centred upon the village of Chipperfield. Three Dolphins went along, Ian Stewart, Mike Wilkinson and Ted Hutchby.

Saturday 25th April 1987 and Dolphin were once more out dancing and collecting funds for the sides coffers. Less than £90 was collected – only half the sum collected in some years.

Saturday May 2nd 1987 and Dolphin performed at the Annual Arnold May procession and dancing day organised by Bendigo Folk Club, as usual all proceeds went to a local charitable cause.

On May 4th 1987, the official May day Bank Holiday Dolphin were at the National Water Sports Centre at the ‘Rollathon and Family Day’. The event in its fourth year was very popular and in 1987 although a ‘rather damp day’; it attracted crowds of 8,000 people.

Radio Trent were there and events were organised at all parts of the centre. But the main event was the Roller Skating races, which were for all ages to enter in appropriate age bands. A couple of short sessions in the arena were called for then a general ‘wander’ around the site, dancing as appropriate.

Sunday 24th May 1987 and Dolphin are dancing a mini-marathon in Nottingham.



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Dolphin's number in the race

Joe Oskiewicz recalls, "Dolphin entered the mini-marathon and danced Processionals the whole way. The route was 2 x 3k circuits of Nottingham centre but Dolphin only did ONE circuit and appeared to come about 50th... People cheered us not realising we had only been round once!"



1987 and the seventh Gate to Southwell made its modern pilgrimage to Southwell Minster from Nottingham Council House on Saturday 30th May.

Dancing teams involved were;

- Dolphin Morris Men
- Foresters Morris Men
- Micklebarrow Morris Men
- Broadstone Morris Men
- Calverton Morris Men
- Aidley's Morris Dancers
- Sergeant Musgrave's Dance
- Greenwood clog
- Leen Valley Morris

The pamphlet this year contained details of the 'Bradmore Morris Dancers of 1618'.

Walkers from the charity, 'Smile Don't Stare' were once again out taking the opportunity to collect with a view to raising funds towards a holiday home for handicapped children.

As in previous years the Home Brewery provided a free drink for each participant at The Bramley Apple pub.

Thaxted was over the weekend of June 6th and 7th 1987 and as usual Dolphin were there, this time on Tour E.



The West Midland Folk Federation organised a regular supply of dancing sides to perform at Warwick Castle from April until August each year. Dolphin were booked for Saturday 18th July 1987, and a letter of thanks on behalf of the WMFF and Warwick Castle was received. Someone took a camera and the following are some of the results;





At the AGM on 17th September 1987 Joe Oskiewicz retained the role of Squire and Simon Haydock replaced Nick as Bagman. Ian Stewart remained the Foreman and Dave Walters continued to play the part of the stick man. Mike was voted in as deputy Squire.

Among other things discussed was the proposed Ring Meeting in 1989. Nick Murphy had relinquished his role as Bagman to concentrate his efforts on coordinating the meeting. Various side members were allocated their jobs in relation to the meeting which covered transport, food, tours, publicity and finance.

Joe, in his Squires report, noted the improvements achieved in the dancing standards of the side. He also noted that from Thaxted onwards the rain was a constant companion; at almost every dance done at Thaxted to *'most of the Thursday night tours, making this one of the wettest Morris seasons I can remember'*. Thaxted did set new standards of decadence when Phil produced Bucks Fizz for breakfast.

Joe remembered that the sun eventually shone in time for the Derbyshire weekend and that, *'the sight of a dehydrated Bagman suffering from alcohol abuse, and Mike doing Nutting girl (or was it Cuckoo's Nest) up a tree does credit to the Morris'*. Joe goes on to say, *'Along with the fun run, Rollathon, Warwick Castle, ceilidh's etc etc – a packed year of Morris events'*.

Joe also records, *'One sad note this year was when we lost Ted due to an ankle injury*

sustained during the Gate [to Southwell], but not to worry we have subsequently found him studying for the Ministry; all the very best for the future Ted. The loss of Ted meant that Mike had to step in and take the part of the fool at short notice, I am sure we are all appreciative of the difficult task Mike has undertaken. Thanks Mike, it's all coming together very nicely'.

[Until this year Mike had been Ted Hutchby's 'apprentice' and occasional 'understudy' but was slowly honing his fooling skills which would allow him to take over the role full time. What Mike couldn't know at that time was that over twenty years later; and with several 'fools and animals' weekends under his belt that he would still be the 'Fule' of Dolphin Morris

Nick Murphy comes in for some praise from Joe, who had found it difficult to devote his full attention because of, 'the wife running off with a travelling salesman'. She probably took the camera with her which probably explains the lack of photographs in the archive.

Nick in his Bagman's report also noted the rain as being a factor and, '*generally appalling*' but notes that collections were down but '*not dramatically so*'. To help Nick out Simon Haydock had taken over the financial side of the Bagman's work and to further relieve the workload Dolphin purchased an ansaphone which was 'absolutely essential' and will make the job for future Bagmen, 'substantially less unpleasant'.

The year ended with the usual fundraising in Lister Gate on 5th December and on 12th December Dolphin performed at the Christmas NTMC ceilidh. The Broad Marsh day for filling the bank account seemed to be coming to a sad demise. '*The bags are much thinner, gone are the days of the £180 for a days 'bottling*'.