



The Hartley Morris Men

Nobody really knows just how old the tradition of Morris Dancing is because up until about a hundred years ago virtually nothing had been written down about it. Like most of our folk culture, the dances were handed down through the generations by word of mouth since its practitioners, ordinary working people, couldn't write. The people who could write, the gentry and the learned were only concerned with recording history as it affected them and what the peasants got up to was generally considered to be vulgar and unimportant.

There are occasional references to Morris Dancing in Shakespeare and also in old court records when dancers have been hauled up before the authorities for crimes like drunkenness or making a din in the streets. So we know that men have been dancing the Morris for hundreds of years but we have very little reliable information about how or why it was performed. We do know that it was usually performed once a year, at Whitsun, and that it was only danced by men. Some think that the dance may once have been part of an old pagan springtime fertility ritual and that the bells and hankies were to scare away evil spirits.

It seems that for many years the tradition of Morris Dancing died out completely in Kent, but we do know of many 'revival' sides that danced in the county at around the turn of the century. There was a side at Meopham, but they disbanded at the outbreak of the First World War. It may have been partially due to this interest in Morris in this area that another side was formed in 1934 in Stansted. In 1939 war again put an end to the dancing but in 1952 some of the Stansted men got together and formed the Hartley Morris. Every summer since then we have danced in the villages of North Kent keeping alive this ancient tradition.

We are always interested in new members, so if you fancy joining us, rather than just being a spectator, drop us a line.

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THURSDAY EVENING TOURS

MAY	3	7.30	Hartley Green
		8.30	Hope & Anchor, Stansted.
	10	8.00	The Red Lion, Offam
		9.00	The Kings Head, Offam
	17	8.00	The Chequers, West Farleigh
	9.00	The Walnut Tree, East Farleigh.	
24	8.30	The Paper Makers Arms, Plaxtol.	
	9.30	The Rortey Crankle, Plaxtol.	
31	8.30	The Kings Head, Shoreham.	
	9.30	The Fruiterers Arms, Crockenhill.	
JUNE	7	8.30	The Prince of Wales, Weald.
		9.30	The Windmill, Weald.
	14	8.30	The Amazon & Tiger, Harvel.
		9.30	The Green Man, Hodsoll Street.
21	9.00	The Tudor Rose, Upper Upnor.	
28	8.30	The Plough, Trottiscliffe.	
	9.30	The Angel, Addington.	
JULY	5	8.30	The Man of Kent, East Peckham.
		9.30	The Chequers, Laddingford.
	12	8.30	Meopham Green
		9.30	The Darnley Arms, Cobham.
	19	8.30	The Dorset Arms. Withyham with Broadwood Morris Men.
26	8.30	The Elm Tree, Paddock Wood.	
	9.30	The Hopbine, Petteridge.	
AUGUST	2	8.30	The Blue Anchor, St. Mary's Platt.
		9.30	The Rose & Crown, Wrotham
	9	8.30	The Chaser, Shipbourne.
		9.30	The Kentish Rifleman, Dunks Green.
16		Broadstairs Folk Festival.	
23	8.30	The Grasshopper, Westerham.	
	9.30	The Cock, Ide Hill.	
30	8.00	The Vine, Sevenoaks.	
	9.00	The Harrow, Ightham Common.	
SEPT	6	8.30	Victoria & Bull, Rochester.

MAY DAY TOUR - 1st MAY

5.30 a.m.	Coldrum Stones
10.00 a.m.	Southfleet Village
11.30 a.m.	The Leather Bottle, Cobham
1.00 p.m.	Victoria, Cliffe.
STROOD INTERLUDE.	
7.00 p.m.	Joiners Arms, West Malling.
8.00 p.m.	The Rose & Crown, Wrotham.

SPRING BANK HOLIDAY - 28th MAY

11.00 a.m.	The Brecknock Arms, Bells Yew Green.
12.00 noon	The Elephants Head, Hook Green.
1.00 p.m.	Globe & Rainbow, Kilndown.
TONBRIDGE COTTAGE HOSPITAL FETE.	
7.30 p.m.	The Cardinals Error, Tonbridge.
8.30 p.m.	The Star, Matfield.

HARTLEY ALE TOURS

SQUIRES TOUR - SATURDAY 2nd JUNE

11.00 a.m.	The Castle Inn, Chiddingstone.
12.00 noon	The Chafford Arms, Fordcombe.
1.00 p.m.	The Northfield House, Speldhurst.

BAGMANS TOUR - SATURDAY 2nd JUNE

11.00 a.m.	The Swan, West Peckham
12.00 noon	Addlested Tavern, E. Peckham.
1.00 p.m.	The Chequers, Laddingford.

GINGES TOUR - SATURDAY 2nd JUNE

11.00 a.m.	The Grasshopper, Westerham.
12.00 noon	The Vine, Sevenoaks.
1.00 p.m.	The Woodman, Otford.

MASSED DISPLAYS

Saturday 2nd June	6.00 p.m.	West Malling
Sunday 3rd June	12.30 p.m.	Wrotham

SHEPHERD NEAME TOUR

SATURDAY 14th JULY

10.00 a.m.	Faversham Market Place
12.00 noon	The Plough, Brabourne Lees
1.00 p.m.	The Walnut Tree, Aldington.
4.00 p.m.	Chilham.
8.00 p.m.	The Sondes Arms, Selling.

SUNDAY 15th JULY

1.00 p.m.	The Alma, Painters Forstal.
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AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY - 27th AUGUST

11.00 a.m.	The Bull, Brenchley.
12.00 noon	The Vine, Goudhurst.
1.00 p.m.	Oak & Ivy, Hawkhurst.
BODIAM CASTLE	
7.00 p.m.	The Royal Oak, Iden Green.
8.15 p.m.	The Peacock, Iden Green.

BOXING DAY

10.00 a.m.	Hartley Green
11.00 a.m.	Hope & Anchor, Stansted.
12.00 noon	The Black Horse, Stansted.
1.00 p.m.	The Rose & Crown, Wrotham.