



## 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 evils 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.

Bagman. Tony Howard, 23 Timber Bank, Meopham, Gravesend, Kent.  
Telephone: Fairseat 822837

# The Hartley Morris Men 1983



### THURSDAY EVENING TOURS

May	5	7.30	Hartley Green
		8.30	Anchor & Hope, Stansted
	12	8.00	Five Bells, Seal
		9.00	Old House at Home, Ightham
	19	8.00	Hop Pole, Nettlestead Green
	9.00	Bush, Blackbird & Thrush, East Peckham	
26	8.00	Ightham Village	
	9.00	Star & Garter, Basted	
June	2	8.00	Green Man, Hodsoil Street
		9.00	Black Horse, Stansted
	9	8.00	Chaser, Shipbourne
		9.00	Plough, Ivy Hatch
	16	8.00	Plough, Trottscliffe
	9.00	Angel, Addington	
23	8.00	Golden Lion, Luddesdown	
	9.00	White Hart, Cuxton	
	30	8.00	Wheatsheaf, Bough Beech
	9.00	Cock, Ide Hill	
July	7	8.00	Wheatsheaf, Kemsing
		9.00	Chequers, Heaverham
	14	8.00	George & Dragon, Westerham
		9.00	White Hart, Brasted
	21	8.00	The Green, Leigh
	9.00	Greyhound, Charcott	
28	8.00	Bell, Beltring	
	9.00	Man of Kent, East Peckham	
August	4	8.00	Red Lion, Offham
		9.00	Joiners Arms, West Malling
	18	8.00	Stag, Wainscott
		9.00	Tudor Rose, Upper Upnor
	25	8.00	Kentish Rifleman, Dunks Green
	9.00	Queens Head, Mereworth	
Sept	1	8.00	Henry VIII, Hever
		9.00	Kentish Horse, Markbeech
	8	8.00	Greyhound, Rochester
		9.00	Bull & Victoria, Rochester

### MAY DAY TOUR - 1st MAY

5.30 a.m.	Coldrum Stones
12.30 p.m.	Greyhound, Charcott
3.00 p.m.	Hever Castle
7.30 p.m.	Vigo, Fairseat
8.30 p.m.	Rose & Crown, Wrotham

### SPRING BANK HOLIDAY

10.30 a.m.	Pembury Green
11.30 a.m.	Elephants Head, Hook Green
12.30 p.m.	Bull, Three Legged Cross
1.30 p.m.	Vine, Cousley Wood
7.00 p.m.	George & Dragon, Speldhurst
8.00 p.m.	Northfield House, Speldhurst

### SHEPHERD NEAME TOUR - JULY 15th-17th

#### FRIDAY 15th

Meet at the Sun, Faversham

#### SATURDAY 16th

10.30 a.m.	Market Square, Faversham
12 noon	Anchor, Abbey Street
1.00 p.m.	White Lion, Selling
4.00 p.m.	Long Market, Canterbury
7.00 p.m.	Dove, Dargate
8.00 p.m.	Plough, Lewson Street
9.00 p.m.	Sun, Faversham

#### SUNDAY 17th

12.30 p.m. Chequers, Doddington

### THE ALE - JUNE 17th-19th

#### SATURDAY 18th

10.30 a.m.	Dorset Street, Sevenoaks
11.30 a.m.	Greyhound, Charcott
12.30 p.m.	Castle Inn, Chiddingstone
3.30 p.m.	Penshurst Place

#### SUNDAY 19th

12.30 p.m. Wrotham Village

### AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY

11.00 a.m.	Star, Matfield
12 noon	Town House, Brenchley
1.00 p.m.	Globe & Rainbow, Kildown
4.00 p.m.	Bodiam Castle
7.00 p.m.	Peacock, Iden Green
8.00 p.m.	Castle, Castle Hill, Nr Brenchley

### BOXING DAY

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