

TO: Future Morris Ale Publicists
FROM: Kate Early, Ravenswood Morris Dancers *Kate*

Here is some down-and-dirty advice about how to publicize morris ales.

CONCOCT A MAILING LIST OF AREA PUBLICATIONS. You will want to send a press release about the ale to all of the daily and weekly newspapers that carry information about arts and community events. It is best to send releases directly to the appropriate person or department, so you might want to look at the paper and see who the entertainment and the arts/community events calendar editors are. If you are not sure, call the paper and ask to whom you should send press releases about folk events.

PREPARE PRESS RELEASE. This is your single most important piece of publicity. A sample press release is attached. Notice that it is written with the assumption that the person reading knows absolutely nothing about morris-dancing, which will usually be the case. Newspaper editors are notoriously lazy and may use steaming chunks of your prose in their article or notice of the ale, so be sure you are clear. Putting the old "who-what-where-when" info in the first paragraph remains a wise idea, as editors will often lift this directly for their notice, adding only the number to call for more information. If you have an interesting black and white photo or two of morris-dancing, you may wish to send it along with the release. Be sure you put a label with the 4 Ws, plus your name and phone number, on the back of each one, in case the photos get separated from the press releases. Do not send snapshots, and understand that they will not return your photos. Don't forget to send press releases to the local TV and radio stations. You might get at least a public service or community calendar announcement, and they might even be sufficiently interested to come out and film something for the 10 O'Clock News.

MAIL PRESS RELEASES AT LEAST 6 WEEKS PRIOR TO THE ALE. Newspaper deadlines are a lot less flexible than most people think, so do not procrastinate. If you have a major change to announce, such as the massed dance venue change on the attached addendum, send it out ASAP.

GIVE COPIES OF THE PRESS RELEASE TO THE PEOPLE ARE THE CONTACT PEOPLE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC INFORMATION. They can't very well answer questions if they don't know what you've said.

1 OR 2 WEEKS BEFORE THE ALE, POSTER THE AREAS WHERE DANCE TOURS WILL TAKE PLACE. If there are no kiosks, shopkeepers often accept posters to put up in their windows. A sample poster is enclosed.

For further information, call 708/699-7915 or 312/728-7409

THE RAVENSWOOD MORRIS DANCERS OF CHICAGO will host THE 1993 MIDWEST MORRIS ALE, a festival of traditional English morris dancing, on Saturday, May 29 and Sunday, May 30. Free performances of this vigorous and exciting dance form will be presented at various locations in Chicago and the suburbs (see schedule, below). Dance teams from the states of Indiana, Iowa, Wisconsin, Michigan, Missouri, Minnesota, Kentucky, Tennessee and New York, and the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Manitoba, will join Ravenswood in the fun of this exuberant springtime event.

Morris dancing originated in the rural Cotswolds of England - Shakespeare's country - and dates back to at least the 15th Century. Contemporary morris dancing has been performed by hundreds of teams around the world since the dance form was rediscovered during the English Folk Revival of the early 20th Century. The dancers face each other in two lines, rhythmically waving handkerchieves or clashing sticks together. They wear bright costumes, and the bells tied to their legs add cheerful percussion to their steps and jumps. Morris dances are typically accompanied by fiddles, accordions, drums and whistles. Many teams embellish their performances with the antics of traditional clown characters, such as Fools and Hobbyhorses, who try to distract the dancers and audience with their tricks and prancing.

The Ravenswood Morris Dancers have performed throughout the Midwest and parts of Canada, and have been featured on "Wild Chicago." This is the first time in the 13-year history of the Midwest Morris Ale that the festival will take place in Chicago.

Saturday, May 29

- 11 am Tour Group A: Shedd Aquarium
 Tour Group B: Old Water Tower
 Tour Group C: Brauer Cafe and Seal Pond at
 Lincoln Park Zoo
 Tour Group D: Scoville Park, Oak Park (Oak Park
 Ave. and Lake St.)
- 1 pm Tour Group A: Art Institute of Chicago
 Tour Group B: Rush Street Area
 Tour Group C: Lincoln Park Conservatory
 Tour Group D: Oak Park Historic District (Chicago
 Ave./Forest Ave./Marion St.)
- 4 pm ALL TEAMS AT THE LINCOLN PARK CONSERVATORY FOR
 MASSED DANCING SPECTACULAR !!

Sunday, May 30

- 10:30 am Tour Group A: Grace Lutheran and St. Mark's
 Episcopal Churches, Geneva 2 (3rd
 and Franklin Sts.)
 Tour Group B: St. Charles Episcopal Church, St.
 Charles (Route 25)
 Tour Group C: St. Lawrence's Episcopal Church,
 Libertyville (Church St.)
- 11:30 am Tour Group D: Town Square, Woodstock
- 1 pm Tour Group A: Third Street Shopping District,
 Geneva
 Tour Group B: Lincoln Park and City Hall, St.
 Charles
 Tour Group C: Libertyville Historical Society
- 3 pm ALL TEAMS AT ISLAND PARK, GENEVA, FOR MASSED
 DANCING SPECTACULAR !!

Press release addendum

As of May 11, 1993

Please make the following performance location change for the 1993 Midwest Morris Ale: The massed dance spectacular scheduled for 4:00 pm on Saturday, May 29 will take place at the Lincoln Park Conservatory, not Buckingham Fountain.

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