

Thoughts on tours from previous ale committees:

Most everyone complained about the length of the drives and the tight schedules.

With two days of touring, we'd like to visit with two different groups.

Remember that it takes a long time to get 200 morris dancers moving.

The two biggest problems were getting people off for the Saturday tours and getting back to dinner after the tours.

Not enough time was spent at the RHP (Ritual Half Pint) stops.

Be prepared to be flexible, as morris dancers are liable to stop and dance at the drop of a hat, and you may be forced by popular acclaim to change the location of one or more of the stops.

In Ann Arbor, we like to have a church tour on Sunday morning.

Busking money was pooled and went into the budget. Some of the places we danced, we were not allowed to busk. Ask first.

Leave particular groups together throughout the course of a day of touring; this is much easier for you to plan, for them to undergo, and it develops a closer camaraderie between the groups who share tours. Groups can mix and see all the other groups at the massed dances.

By most reports, the 40-50 minute bus ride to Madison was at the outer limits of tolerability. We went that way because of the great desirability of the site. We would do the same thing again for the same reason.

People seem to like to have a Mass dance earlier in the day on Saturday. The time at the library mall should have been organized as such. A good rule of thumb: having more than 3-4 teams performing in one place requires some sort of advance planning or formality, less than that and you can wing it just fine. The dancing at library mall was intended to be less concentrated and more informal, but morris teams tend to congregate when they are in sight of each other.

We explicitly separated the roles of tour guide and gig leader this time. The tour guides are there to see that people get to where and when they are supposed to be, and to carry stuff like First Aid kits. The gig leaders should be experienced morris dancers; their job is to manage the performance at a given place. With three or four teams and a bit of attention, it is a simple job - but the performance dies if nobody is doing it.

Map and directions to sites. Develop rain plan.

The two things people seem to remember most about that Ale are the successful Sunday morning church tours and the miserable shower arrangements.

Long bus rides are universally hated; after thirty minutes people start to wonder when they are going to get there; after forty-five minutes they think they are never going to get there; and after an hour they

Tours (continued):

they are not going to think the ride was worth it. Choose less "attractive" sites that are closer to the camp; only you will know what they missed (which is, of course, the problem!). Simultaneous tours and workshops spreads the enthusiasm too thin, is divisive, and in my opinion does not work.

What I want from a tour is: short bus rides, good dance surfaces, and (find or create) a crowd; then just let me dance.

By and large, the dancers seemed to like doing small tours on Saturday and larger ones on Sunday.

We had complaints about a lack of audience on the second day.

Most important, keep the damn bus rides short. Very little makes dancers more irritated than long bus rides and short stays.

Make sure tour guides are specifically informed of where to go. Telling them that they are going to _____ park is not enough. Whoever scouted the places should talk to the tour guides about exactly where to take the tours.

Beth's thoughts for the 1990 Ale:

Consider not going into the Twin Cities at all. We will be at least 45 minutes from the cities.

Consider bus rides to a spot where walking tours (including RHP stops, of course!) can be done, so that the stay in one spot feels longer.

I think we should schedule tours for leaving the campsite after lunch, so we avoid the delays of lunch while on tour, and also save on the time and expense of packing lunches (this requires additional paper products).

Consider Stillwater as a location for the massed dance at least one day; I think we can probably find the most people there.