



May 9, 1997

Dear Morris,

We are collecting our wits and generally putting together the necessary for the 1997 Midwest Morris Ale (Surnamed "the Old Peculier Ale"). So far we have about 170 people signed up. If you get this letter, you may assume we have you registered in the Bagman's inscrutable spreadsheet, and all is well.

The venues are lined up, the beer will be Gray's and Capital Brewery, the T-shirts are being printed (cream background, logo as shown, but it's cooler in color.) We all going to walk down from the capitol square and take over the Angelic Brewery for a sumptuous lunch on the Saturday, and their bitter is good. Also Casey and Bill are providing some very good homebrew.

If you have anything we need to know, now is the time to tell us. As far as we know, all the people with children under 5 know they are not allowed on the school bus, but if it's news to you, you need to make arrangements to get them to town (if they're coming) either with us or by yourselves.

See you soon!

Barbara

*Teach Blidgett Wm + Mary
Stay o'ute in Madison!*

*RT
DB
Halls*

Arrive early

*CM
JS
RS*

1997 Midwest Morris Ale General Advice and Miscellaneous Poop

1. **Emergency phone number** - In case of emergency, the Bethel Horizons phone number is 608-935-5885.
2. **Confirmation of reservations** - Everyone that asked for inside accommodations has been given them, and we have some left, if anyone wants to change from tenting to indoors.
3. **Special diets** - All the special diets that we know about (i.e. the ones you filled out on the form) will be accommodated.
4. **ETA/ETD Information** - We need to know Estimated Times of Arrival and Departure for everyone who needs transport to Bethel. Please give us the news as soon as you can. (*Maroon Bells! When will you arrive?*)
5. **Childcare** - There will be space for childcare, but parents will need to provide it. There will be an organizational signup sheet at the registration desk. Toys and the like are pretty much up to you.
6. **Weather** - Spring weather in Wisconsin is notoriously unpredictable. The average last frost day is May 10. *Bring warm clothes.* Rain is (as we know) fairly likely. *Bring raingear.* Also, teams need to *bring umbrellas to cover the musicians while they are playing.* On the other hand, it can reach the high 70's or even 80, so bring sun screen .
7. **Keeping warm** - The nights can get very cold, and tenting on damp ground can get truly miserable if you don't have adequate warmies. If you have a Kmart-type sleeping bag, you might consider a blanket to wrap around it, for instance.
8. **Camping stuff** - bring bedding, towels, personal items, a suitable cup or other potable fluid container, flashlight and bug dope. The footing can be damp even if it doesn't rain, and there are interesting walks you may want to try.
9. **Tenting** - If you want to tent but do not have one, or bringing it creates serious hardship, tell us soon. We may be able to scrounge some tents from friends and neighbors, but we need to know how many.
10. **Activities** - We are still looking for workshop leaders...please try to think of something to share. In addition, we will be searching for callers for the Saturday night Contra Dance. Sign up at the registration desk, or see Frances Hough, or both. Also, after the band is done, if people want to continue dancing, and there are callers willing to do the necessary, we will also need volunteer musicians willing to play for a while. The usual Sunday night madness is on the schedule, so if you need to bring equipment to amaze the multitudes at the ceili, be sure to bring it.

This ale will be somewhat unusual in that the whole group will be together most of the time. We will start dancing out early on Saturday at the Farmers' Market, on the 4 corners of the Capitol grounds. There will be a lot of mass dancing, both Saturday at Blue Mounds State Park, and Sunday at Governor Dodge State Park. We thought dancing was more fun than traveling from stand to stand, and acted accordingly. So you may want to have a couple of backup show dances as well as your actual ones (count on 2).

Address questions and send information to Barbara at 76402.166@compuserve.com or John at jpstott@src.wisc.edu. John is away for the week of 5/12, so plan accordingly. See you soon!

Travel to 1997 the Midwest Morris Ale

- * Air: the nearest airport is the Dane County Regional Airport in Madison. The van Galder Bus Company (608-257-5593) provides bus service to Madison from Chicago O'Hare. Badger Coaches (608-255-6771) provide service to Madison from Mitchell Field in Milwaukee.
- * Car: the campsite is located about five miles North of Dodgeville, WI. Turn off State Highway 23 onto Iowa County Highway ZZ and proceed about a mile East. Bethel Horizons is down a short dirt road to the South.
- * Car Rental: Madison and the Airport have the usual rental companies. You should book in advance, both for lower rates and to ensure that there is a car for you. If you have reserved a car at the airport and your flight is delayed until outside normal operating hours then the rental company will normally wait for you if you have a reservation.
- * Ship: the nearest port is Milwaukee but there are no passenger services. There is a car ferry from Luddington, MI, to Manitowoc (North of Milwaukee).
- * Taxi: the fare from Madison to the camp site is about \$80 (about \$10 more from the Airport). If you are arriving at some weird time when we can't meet you then this may be your only choice apart from car rental. The fare from the Airport to downtown (where we shall be on Saturday till mid afternoon) is about \$10.
Badger Cab 608-256-5566
Madison Taxi 608-255-8294 800-894-3866
Union Cab 608-242-2000
- * Train: there is an Amtrak request stop at Columbus, North East of Madison. You will need prior arrangements for transport from there.

Transport to Bethel

Oak Apple is able to provide some shuttling from the Madison Airport, and has arranged to transport the participants it knows about. If you will need transport, and you have not yet told us about it, please E mail Barbara at 76402.166@compuserve.com. We will get back individually to people who are looking for transport.

If you have already gotten a response from John, we know about you and you needn't tell us again, unless your plans change. Thanks.

1997 Midwest Morris Ale Music Cheat Sheet

BEAUX OF LONDON CITY - (SHOOTING) ^{Adderbury} (1/2 A) AA BB



HUNTING THE SQUIRREL NDT $\text{♩} = 116$ (Headington) $\frac{1}{2} A. (AB)^+ A$



THE LOLLIPOP MAN Carey A. (AB³)³ A (Ducklington)



OLD MOLLY OXFORD (STEP-BACK) NDT $\text{♩} = 104$ A. (A⁺ B⁺ A⁺) (Fieldtoan)



THE ORANGE IN BLOOM CJS MSS

$\frac{1}{2} A. (AB)^+ (AC)^+ A$ (Full) (SHERBORNE)

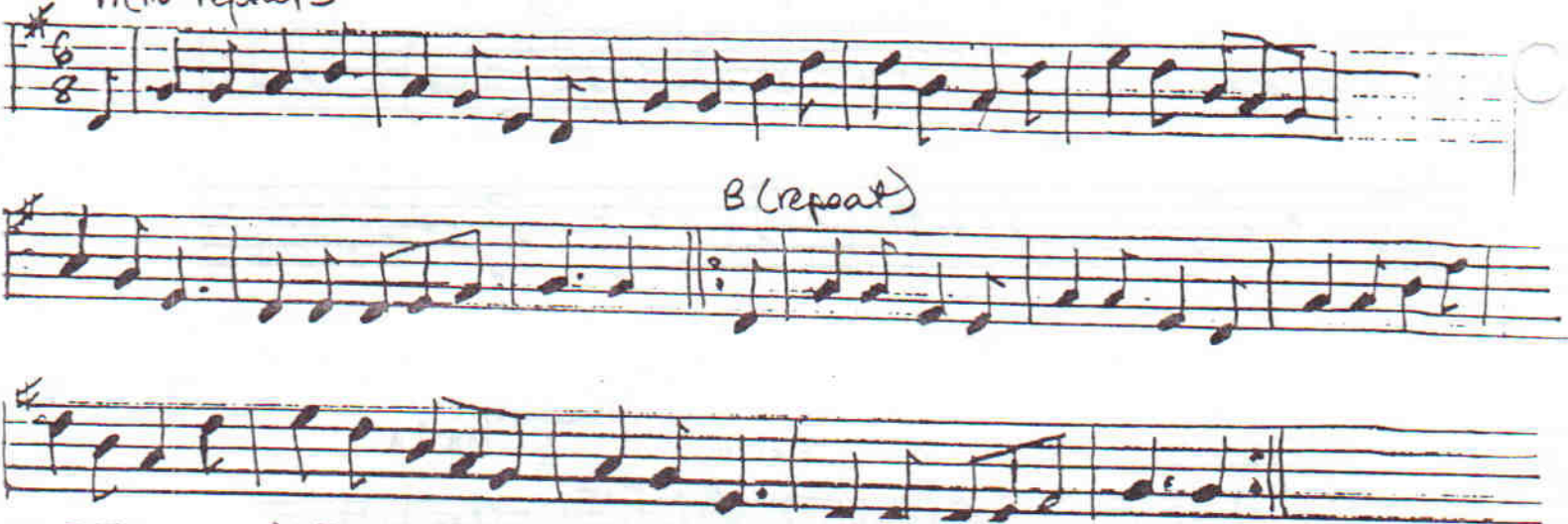


1997 Midwest Morris Ale Music Cheat Sheet

Solker. O

A (no repeat)

A B B



VANDALLS OF HAMMERWICH

Jour EFDSS

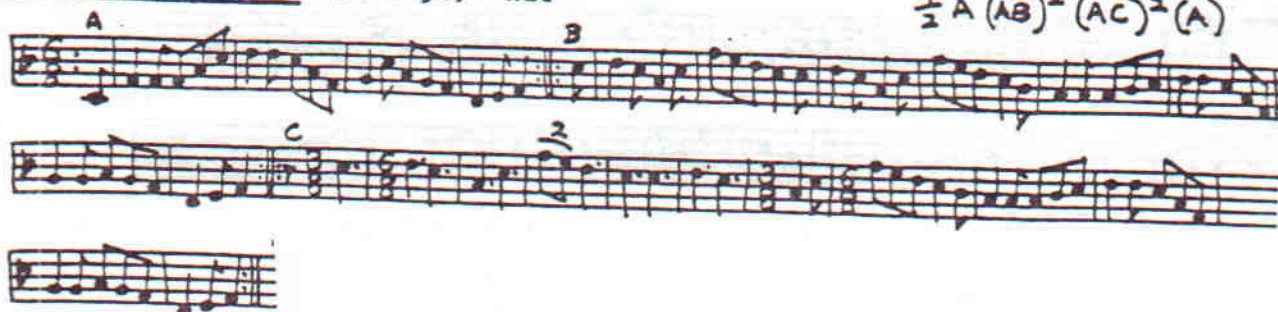
$(AB)^4 A^2 B$



(Bledington)

WILLIAM AND NANCY (♩ = 96) MDT

$\frac{1}{2} A (AB)^2 (AC)^2 (A)$



THE ABRAM MORRIS DANCE.

BY MAUD KARPELES.

ABRAM is a small town in Lancashire situated a few miles from Wigan. The dance was described to me by Mr. Richard Porter whom I visited at his home in Hindley in November, 1931. He was then in poor health and has, I regret to say, since died. He had learned the dance from an old Abram dancer who died a few years ago at the age of 70. Mr. Porter also described two stick-dances which used formerly to be performed in Hindley, but although I noted these dances I have not reproduced them here as their authenticity seems doubtful.

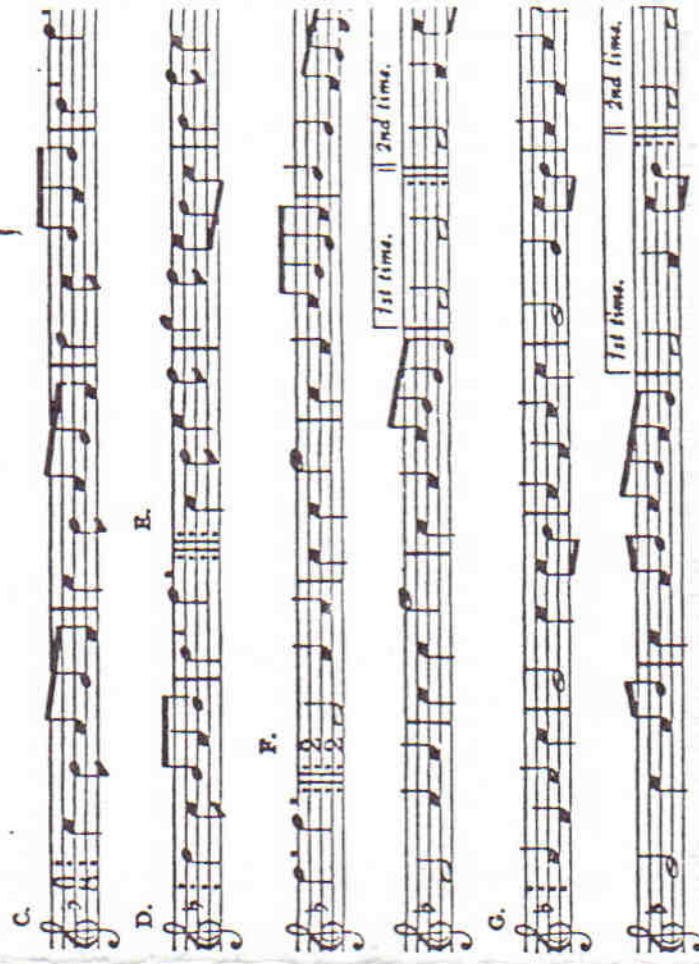
In November, 1932, I visited Abram and saw several people who had formerly taken part in the dance. From them and others I obtained some interesting information, but no one could give me a detailed description of the dance itself, so that the notation which follows has had to be based almost solely on what I learned from Mr. Porter.

NOTATION OF THE ABRAM CIRCLE DANCE.

Any even number of dancers can take part, although the usual number appears to have been sixteen.

Dancers stand in a circle, facing the centre, numbering round counter-clockwise, so that odd numbers are on the left of their partners and even numbers on the right.

The skipping-step is used throughout. The dancers carry a white handkerchief in each hand, knotted on to the middle finger, and, as otherwise stated, the two hands are swung up alternately (*i.e.* the left hand is swung up as the right is taken with the right foot and vice versa). The swing is made with a very loose arm and the action is similar to that used in the Bampton arm-swing.



A. 1-8

B. 1-4
5-8

C. 1-4
5-8

D. 1-4

3-4

Dancers, making a quarter turn to the left, move round in a circle, clockwise, in couples, making a quarter turn to the right of their partners (*i.e.* inside). On the second beat of the bar they throw both hands up overhead.

Partners face (even numbers with backs to the centre) and go back-to-back passing round, throwing both hands up overhead on the last beat.

Couples move round clockwise as in A 1-4, throwing up both hands on the last beat of their partners, throwing up hands as before.

Partners face and stand still. The right hand is swung round in a big circle in front of body, counter-clockwise, *i.e.* starting in an outward and upward direction. In the second bar, as the hand is lowered, partners make a slight obeisance to each other. The rhythm of the hand-movement is like that of the Adderbury "Dip-down-and-together," but the circle is a much bigger one.

Repeat as above, swinging the left hand round in a clockwise direction.

f. 1-4

Dancers' move round in a very small circle, clockwise (almost a turn single). They throw up both hands overhead on the second beat of the last bar. There are no other hand-movements.

f. 5-8

As above, but making a one-and-a-quarter turn, clockwise, so that odd numbers finish facing clockwise and even numbers counter-clockwise.

f. 1-16

Odd numbers counter-clockwise Dancers finish in ring formation, facing the centre, and all throw up both hands on the second beat of the last bar. If possible, they should rejoin their partners, but this will depend upon the number of dancers in the set.

g. 1-8

All move slowly forward to the centre, and on the second beat of the last bar, dancers throw both hands up overhead.

g. 9-16

Dancers fall back from the centre, throwing both hands up as before on the last beat.

The above movements are then all repeated. In the final bar, as the dancers are retiring from the centre, the hands are swung up on the first beat, and on the second beat they are swung with a decisive movement, down and out, to shoulder-level. A slight pause is made whilst the arms are held in this position, which is similar to that of the "wide" position in the Bampton Princess Royal Whole-capers.

There is in Abram a plot of ground, unoccupied and unenclosed, measuring about 21 yards by 14, known as the Morris Dancers' Ground, and it is generally believed that the land was granted to the dancers many years ago on condition that they danced on it once in every twenty-one years. A plain, undecorated Maypole used formerly to stand in the centre of the ground, which is now surrounded on three sides by the works of the Maypole Colliery, so called because the land where the pits are¹ sunk formed part of a farm called Maypole Farm. The Wigan Coal Corporation had wished to acquire the Morris Dancers' Ground, which adjoins the site of the farm, but were unable to do so as there appeared to be no title-deeds in existence.

The dance was last performed in 1901, and previously in 1880. In 1922, the dance failed to take place, and the Abram Urban District Council decided to fix a concrete post at each corner of the site in order to retain it, if possible, for the people of Abram.

The dance was performed by single men, and no married man was allowed to take part. It took place in the month of June (or July, according to some), and the dancers used to go out for two or three days. The first dance had to be performed on the plot of ground in order to "claim" it, and after that the dancers processed through the streets, doing what they called the "Long Morris," which appeared to be a simple form of dance resembling the Winster Processional, and halted at certain places—usually outside the public-houses—to perform the Circle Dance.

The dancers were accompanied by two clowns, who carried long wooden ladles in which they collected money, a King, and a Queen who was impersonated by an unmarried woman.

The King and Queen carried between them a Garland. This was a wooden erection shaped like a bee-hive, borne on top of a pole about six feet in length. It was made

of wooden hoops, and was trimmed with leaves and ribbons, whilst watches and silver ornaments were suspended from it, and a silver tea-pot was placed on top.*

When dancing through the streets the King and Queen, bearing the Garland, headed the procession, but during the Circle Dance they stood in the centre of the ring whilst the dance was performed around them. The Maypole which stood on the plot of ground was evidently regarded by the dancers as a substitute for the Garland, for they said that they used to dance round the Pole when practising.

The men wore white straw hats, white shirts and white waistcoats, with red, white and blue waistbands and hatbands, and sashes worn crosswise over the shoulder. The Queen wore grand, but ordinary, feminine attire.

The dancers had all their expenses paid and were given in addition so much a day, the remainder of the collection being given to a charity. The dancers had to pay a deposit of 5s. each when the practices started in order "to fasten them," and this was returned when the dancing was over. A high standard of dancing was evidently insisted upon, because "those who didn't step 'gradely' (i.e. right) had to step back."

A description of the 1880 celebrations is given in *Memorials of Abram* (J. Heywood, 1882), by J. Leyland, who witnessed the performance of the dance, and this account corresponds in practically all its details with the information that I gathered.