

*and mass dances*  
Thoughts on workshops from previous ale committees:

People from the midwest really appreciate the workshops.

When sending information about massed dances - pick the keys that the music will be played in.

Mass dancing starts the Ale for many dancers and cannot be left out of Saturday morning without creating a great vacuum within the hearts of those dancers.

Simultaneous tours and workshops spreads the enthusiasm too thin, is divisive, and in my opinion does not work.

Attendance at Ann Arbor 1988 workshops (sign-ups, not necessarily actuals):

Pre-WWI Bampton, Andy Bullen - 20  
English Country - Beg., Fae Fuerst - 12  
English Country - Exp., Fae Fuerst - 12  
English Solo Clog - Beg., John Cavanaugh - 9  
English Solo Clog - Exp., John Cavanaugh - 3  
Border Morris, Carol Henderson - 17  
Mumming, Rudd Rayfield - 20  
Fooling, John Gillett - 26  
Rapper, Karen Dotson - 17

Look for previously untapped talent when choosing your leaders as this can be a great opportunity for budding teachers.

I would suggest that you view your job as creating the opportunity for great things to happen rather than making great things happen.

Everyone who requested 2 show dances got them. However, there were a number of people who felt that this was too long. One day, we literally ran out of mass dances to do between the shows. On the other hand, I know how irritated some teams have been when some teams did two and others only one. It is a dilemma that I have no solution for except to wish you luck.

For the ale, we choose only 7 mass dances, which was too few. Unfortunately, a lot of the people did not know either William and Nancy or Lollipop Man; consequently, especially on small tours, the mass dances were pretty minimal. Also, for the long show dance periods, 7 dances was not enough. My recommendation would be for 7-9 dances most of which would be easy. Furthermore, a number of them should not be physically demanding. Dancers do get tired.

About 60% of the ale attended workshops. Our smallest was music, 7 people, the largest was Oddington, 24 dancers. Most of the rest were 12-16. Having sign-up sheets for them worked fairly well, although attendance could swing close to 50%. We almost cancelled Tango, and then ended up with 18 people attending, whereas Border went from 15 signed up to 10 attending.

If possible, have the workshop leader arrange for music within his own team, as it will be easier for all concerned. Barring that, make sure you have some musicians standing by. Introduce the leaders to everyone at some point, so if someone has a question he/she knows who to ask. Also, tell participants what they need to bring.

## Workshops, mass dances (cont.):

For dancers who do not want to dance, prepare some kind of a walking guide. Even if it is not the Rockies, attendees often want to explore a little of the area. Other than that, I'd advise you to stick to the basics, Morris/Sword/Clog/Fooling, etc., with a couple of extraneous ones thrown in. The responses to our workshop letter all favored the basics. This is, after all, a Morris Ale.

## Beth's thoughts for the 1990 ale:

Perhaps we should decide to have each team do only one show dance, period. If so, we should announce this in the mid-March mailing.

I agree with the idea of keeping the mass dances to simpler ones, although I'd also suggest considering how they look to an audience.

One suggestion that someone on the steering committee had was to not send descriptions and music for mass dances, but give a phone number and name of someone to call if they had questions. I'll leave this up to you.

## Ideas for workshops that have been suggested/offered:

- Debra Goodlaxson on other aspects of performance
- Steve Parker on Sacred Harp
- Mayfield person on either Lichfield or Ascot (the Mayfield contact I have is Regan Anderlini - 415-592-1895).
- I believe Rudd offered to do something on mumming or fooling

## Teams who have indicated they will attend and traditions they dance:

Mayfield - Ascot, Bampton, Lichfield  
Oak Apple - Bledington, Fieldtown, Headington  
Bloomington Quarry - did not list any!  
Castlewood - Ilmington, Brackly, plus Bledington, Fieldtown, Adderbury, Bampton mass dances from past ales.  
Bells - Adderbury, Ilmington, Fieldtown, Bampton  
Grand Rapids - Bampton, Bucknell, Adderbury  
Merry Heymakers - Bledington, Headington, Adderbury, Fieldtown  
Oak Apple-in-exile - Bledington, Headington, Fieldtown, Minneapolis, Bampton, Adderbury, Ilmington (which she says Oak Apple does), plus the odd dances - Ducklington, Oddington, Lichfield, Bucknell  
Ann Arbor - Bucknell, Bidford, Bledington, some Ducklington, Bampton, Fieldtown  
Capering Roisters - Bledington, Adderbury, Wheatley and bits and pieces of lots of others  
Prairie Waves - Bledington, Border