

What's Afoot

No 126 Spring
April-June 2022



FOND FAREWELL TO THE FINEST FOOL

PLUS: JIM'S TRIPLE TRIUMPH, NEWS
ON CLUBS FESTIVALS AND SESSIONS
AND MORE

Official magazine
of **Devon Folks**
dance song music morris

£1.50



FOLK AT THE FLAVEL

SOME GREAT CONCERTS COMING UP AS PART OF THE EXCITING FOLK SERIES IN DARTMOUTH'S HIGHLY RATED ARTS CENTRE. TICKETS AVAILABLE ON 01803 839530 OR ONLINE AT WWW.THEFLAVEL.ORG.UK

SATURDAY 23RD APRIL 2022 AT 7:30PM

FLOOK

Folk at the Flavel welcomes back for a second visit, *Flook*, one of the legendary folk bands of the late 1990's and early 2000's. After forming in 1997, *Flook* had a remarkably successful performing and recording career and they won the accolade of Best Group at the BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards in 2006. After a long hiatus they reformed a few years ago and in 2019 released a new album and began touring again. The album, *Ancora*, was brilliantly received and was nominated in the best album category at the BBC Radio 2 folk awards.

SATURDAY 8TH OCTOBER 2022 AT 7:30

KATHRYN ROBERTS AND SEAN LAKEMAN

Kathryn Roberts and Sean Lakeman have long established themselves as one of the UK folk scene's most rewardingly enduring partnerships with a story that includes 25 years of music making. The Dartmoor-based husband and wife team have twice won the coveted 'best duo' title at the BBC Radio Two Folk Awards consistently delivering assured, distinctive performances as evidenced by their most recent album released in 2020, *On Reflections*. The evening promises a whistle-stop tour through their artistic journey to date from their early days as members of folk supergroup '*Equation*' to their most recent exceptionally well received work.

STOP PRESS:

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE THAT WE HAVE FINALLY SECURED A DATE FOR THE TWICE POSTPONED GIG BY FAIRPORT CONVENTION WHICH WILL NOW TAKE PLACE ON SUNDAY 23RD OCTOBER. TICKETS ARE GOING FAST SO MAKE SURE YOU BOOK EARLY.

ALSO: WE CAN CONFIRM PETER KNIGHT'S GIGSPANNER WILL BE AT THE FLAVEL ON 26TH NOVEMBER 2022 AT 7:30PM

Articles, features, news to:

EDITOR

John Foxen

devonfolkeditor@gmail.com

129 Tamar Avenue,
Tavistock, Devon,
PL19 9HZ

Assistant Editor

Mab Foxen

All diary dates, events,
club & other listings to:
diary@devonfolk.org.uk

All advertising enquiries & copy to:

Anne Gill

01803 290427

adverts@devonfolk.org.uk

Rates

Full page £30 (portrait)

Half page £18 (landscape)

Quarter page £12 (portrait)

*Eighth page £6
(landscape)

(*min. 3 issues)

Premium rate for colour,
and discount for repeat
ads—please enquire

Subscription/distribution enquiries:

Steve Gill

Maleth, 11, Cleveland Rd,
Torquay, TQ2 5BD

01803 290427
email

anne.m.gill@icloud.com

Annual subscription on £6

Individual copies £1 + SAE

Bulk orders – please
enquire.

Cheques to 'Devon Folk'
for

adverts & subscription

Electronic payment: please
enquire or see website
www.devonfolk.org.uk

Printed by:
ABC Services
of Tavistock

What's Afoot 126: Contents

Coming events	5
Festival news	9
A May Day carol	10
Mandolin Matt	11
Concertina time	13
Club news	16
Listings	17
Morris Matters	23
Ceilidh comeback	25
Sidford Diamond	32
Tribute to a caller	28
Jim's triple triumph	30
Tears for a clown	33
Goodbye, Dancing Dave	35
In memoriam: Brenda Tombs	36
Devon Folk news	37

OUR Front page picture features the amazing Mike Boston of Great Western Morris. See his obituary on Page 33.

The Editor's View

CONGRATULATIONS to Seth Lakeman whose single *Higher We Aspire* has been added to the BBC Radio 2 playlist. Does this mean we are on the verge of a folk revival with our music finally finding popular acceptance? It would be nice if this were so but experience over the years has left me doubtful. I remember Donovan having a string of hits in the Sixties and Dylan and Simon and Garfunkel being regulars on the radio. Fairport Convention Was this the start of the folk revolution? No. The folkies were swept away by glam rock. Then in the Seventies, Steeleye Span made it big with *Gaudete* and *All Around My Hat* only to be pushed aside by punk. I'm afraid we'll have to get used to our music being marginalised but at least artists like Seth Lakeman are pushing it out to the public and will win new converts to the cause.

John Foxen

NEXT COPY DEADLINE: May 20th 2022

What's Afoot is published four times a year by Devon Folk, covering April-June, July-September, October-December and January-March. To ensure readers get maximum benefit from listings that start on the first of the first month, we aim to start distributing in the middle of the month before. This means final copy dates for articles and adverts are: Feb 20th (April-June), May 20th (July-September), August 20th (October-December) and November 20th (January-March). The Editor and Devon Folk accept no liability for content of copy from advertisers. Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Editor and Devon Folk. We will always consider items for publication but reserve the right to edit them where necessary. Any material offered for consideration that needs to be returned to the sender should be accompanied by a prepaid, addressed envelope.



Warwick FOLK FESTIVAL

21-24 JULY 2022

CONCERTS • CRAFTS • KIDS
CUISINE • BEER FESTIVAL



Show of Hands



Seth Lakeman



Spiers & Boden



The Young'uns

The Wilderness Yet • Will Pound & Jenn Butterworth
Nancy Kerr and James Fagan • Zach Johnson
Janice Burns and Jon Doran • Rosie Hood Trio
The Undoing of Polly Button • many more...

NEW SITE: **Castle Park, Warwick, CV34 6AX**

www.warwickfolkfestival.co.uk

All hail the Green Man!

We've been cooped up too long. Here's a round-up of some of the great outdoor and indoor events in the months ahead

AFTER a winter that couldn't seem to make up its mind what season it was, we are slowly moving towards the time of outdoor events. It's good to announce that the season will be opened and closed this year by two highly popular events that had been clobbered by covid: the Green Man festival in Bovey Tracey on Saturday April 30 and Pudsey Day in Tavistock in November.

Both events attract morris sides from all over the county and beyond and there is also a great deal of singing and music.

What's Afoot will provide more details of Pudsey Day nearer the time.

At the Bovey Tracey festival, organised by Grimspound Border Morris, the Green Man, symbol of the coming summer, will kick off proceedings by leading a parade of dancers through the town. Starting at the Bell Inn at around 10am (this could be morris time, allow half an hour either way), the invited sides will



The Green Man, with his young companion Twig, in Bovey Tracey

Picture: HEATHER NEWLAND

process down Fore Street and back to the triangle by the Cromwell Inn. Morris sides will perform at spots around the town until approximately 4pm when the Green Man will be ritually stripped of his covering of vegetation. Grimspound Border hope to perform a Mummings Play at some point during the day.

Fore Street will be closed to traffic for the day and lined with a variety of stalls. There should be singing and music in various pubs. Just follow your ears on the day.

The event often attracts sides from across the country but this year all but one are from Devon. This decision was made because of the Covid situation when Grimspound first decided to go ahead with the mini-fest. These are the sides that have shown an interest: Grimspound Border, Newton Bushel, Glory of the West, Bradninch Millers, Black Bess Border,

SPONSORS OF DEVON FOLK

Devon Telecom

Play the moment, pause the memories
info@devontelecom.co.uk

THE BIG EVENTS

Lodestone Border, Otter Morris, Dartmoor Border, Isambards Gasket Rats, Wreckers Border, Harberton Navy, Beltane Border, Dartington Morris and Old Town Twelves. Shuffle the Deck Appalachian dancers may also be there.

On Sunday, those morris sides with some energy left after a day of dancing will be getting up at Stupid o'clock (that's well before dawn) to dance up the sun. If you'd like to see what some consider an ancient ritual and others call a display of modern masochism, here are the sides who have told us where they will be.

Beltane, Black Bess and Grimspound: on the road beneath Haytor Rocks on Dartmoor.

Dartmoor Border Morris: Peek Hill car park.

Wreckers Border Morris: Kit Hill car park, Cornwall.

There is a lot going on before and after May Day. Here's a round-up of some of the big events we've been told about..

APRIL

KATHRYN ROBERTS and Sean Lakeman will be in concert at South Dartmoor Community College, Balland Lane, Ashburton, TQ13 7EW on Friday April 1, performing songs from their CD, *On Reflection*, which reinterprets some of their earlier material. You have two more chances to see them in Devon: at Teignmouth Pavilions on Wednesday April 27 and at the Plough Arts Centre, Great Torrington on Saturday May 14.

Devon duo, Edgelarks, aka slide guitarist Phillip Henry and fiddle and banjo player Hannah Martin, are the special guests at Topsham Folk Club on Sunday 3rd. See the advert on Page 40

There's a chance to catch Devon troubadour Paul Downes on Monday 4th at Teignmouth Folk Club, The Brass, 3 Hollands Rd, Teignmouth TQ14 8SR. See advert on Page 31.

Singer-songwriter Boo Hewardine is appearing at Otterton Mill, Otterton, nr Budleigh Salterton, Devon, EX9 7HG on Wednesday 6th.

Popular duo Winter Wilson will be at Bideford Folk Song Club, Joiners Arms 6 Market Place, Bideford, EX39 2DR, on Thursday 7th. See the advert on Page 14.

Opportunities to see the amazing people's poet Les Barker in concert are rare enough so when he is coupled with the madcap Geordie Keith Donnelly, it's a gig that shouldn't be missed. The



duo (pictured left) are performing as Idiot and Friend (you can decide which is which) at Folk on the Moor on Sunday 10th. See the advert on Page 8 for details. A fortnight later, on Sunday 24th Folk on the Moor is hosting rising Devon duo Harbottle and Jonas.

Also on Sunday 10th, Jon Boden & the Remnant Strings are appearing at Dartington Great Hall. Drawn from the line-up of Jon's genre-busting big band the Remnant Kings, the group features Jon (fiddle, guitars, concertina, stomp-box), Helen Bell (viola), Morven Bryce (violin) and Lucy Revis (cello). For more details, see www.dartington.org

Saturday 16th sees Jim Causley presenting *Songs of Devon at the Plough Arts Centre* in Torrington. He's more than qualified for this gig, having just released the last album in his Devon song CD trilogy (see the review on Page 30). For more details of the event, check out www.theploughartscentre.org.uk

On Wednesday 20th, The Unthanks – who as heard on TV thanks to their work with *Worzel Gummidge* – are at Exeter Corn Exchange, Market Street, Exeter, EX1 1BW.

Cornwall-based singer and songwriter Mike Silver (right) will be at Exeter Folk and Acoustic Music Club on Friday 22nd. See the advert on Page 17

Also on Friday, the excellent guitarist Clive Carroll is in concert at Calstock Arts, The Old Chapel, Sand Lane, PL18 9QX.

Legendary folk band Flook are at the Flavel in Dartmouth on Saturday 23rd. See the advert on page 2

Get ready to rock with the Oyster Band who are playing at Exeter Corn Exchange, Market Street, EX1 1BW on Thursday 28th.

Also on Thursday 28th, duo Wildwood Jack are the guests at Bideford Folk Club (see advert on page 14).

MAY

JIM CAUSLEY and Bill Murray are both experts on the songs of Dartmoor and there is a



chance to hear them talk about and perform a selection of those ballads on Friday 6th. They are bringing Devon's history to life for the Moretonhampstead History Society to help raise funds for the Moreton Archive. See www.moretonhampstead.org.uk for up-to-date details.

As usual, Jim is being a very busy boy. Saturday 7th sees him at the Lord High Admiral in Plymouth with shanty crew Mariners Away while on Sunday 8th he'll be at the Dart Music Festival (see Page ?? for more details).

This is a good month for fiddle fans. Sam Sweeney is appearing at the Pavilion Teignmouth on Sunday 15th and on Sunday 22nd the Gigspanner Big Band, led by Steeleye Span fiddler Peter Knight and featuring Edgelarks, aka Phillip Henry and Hannah Martin, will be at Topsham Folk Club. See advert on Page 40.

Suthering, who were featured in the previous issue of What's Afoot are sharing the bill with The Last Inklings at the Beehive in Honiton on the 7th (see beehivehoniton.co.uk) and appearing on their own at St Leonard's Church, Yelverton, on the 12th. And if you fancy a go at singing yourself, here's a reminder that Suthering run two community choirs: The Wheelhouse Folk Choir in Tavistock and The Great Sea Choir in Plymouth. You can find details of the two choirs on their Facebook pages.

World Unlimited has organised two concerts this month at St Mary the Virgin Church, Waverley Road, Newton Abbot, with Keston Cobblers Club on Friday 13th and bluegrass band Old Baby Mackerel on Saturday 21st. See www.worldunlimited.co.uk for details

If a newspaper such as the Daily Mail unbends enough to call an act "folk with finesse", it must be something special. The three young women who earned this accolade, The Magpies, bring their "transatlantic folk sound" to Folk On The Moor on Sunday 22nd (see advert Page 8)

The following Sunday, Folk on the Moor hosts Kenny Speirs from the Scottish borders.

Harbour Lights are the featured artists at Bideford Folk Song Club. Joiners Arms, 6 Market Place, EX39 2DR on Thursday 26th. See the advert on Page 14.

JUNE

OUR Cornish neighbours make a great song and dance of St Piran's Day so let's not forget Devon's own patron saint, St Boniface. His day is Sunday June 5th and celebrations in Crediton

town square are being led by Jim Causley, who has more than a few Devon anthems in his repertoire. Let's hope he has some voice left for his concert on Friday 10th at Otterton Mill, nr Budleigh Salterton, EX9 7HG.

Friday 10th also sees the start of the Pennymoor Song and Ale weekend at the London Inn, Morchard Bishop EX17 6NW. Advance booking is needed for this popular event that runs until Sunday night. Speak to Sally Holland on 01363 85022 or email her at spool2@btinternet.com. For other Pennymoor events, see the advert on Page 22.

If you missed Boo Hewerdine in Otterton in April or you saw him and fancy a second helping, he is at Folk On The Moor on Sunday 12th, teaming up with the fine American guitarist Brooks Williams as State of the Union.

Na Mara are the guests at Bideford Folk Club on Thursday 16th. See advert on Page 14.

On Sunday 26th, Folk On The Moor is presenting Steve Tilston (pictured right), whose songs such as *The Naked Highwayman* and *Slip Jigs And Reels* have been covered by such great artists as Peter Bellamy and Fairport Convention. As well as being a noted songwriter, Steve is also a fine guitarist and singer so he is



Picture: Shay Rowan



The Bellowhead boys, John Spiers and Jon Boden (without their big band) are the very special guests at Topsham Folk Club on Sunday 26th. Expect a great night. See the advert on Page 40 for details.

THE BIG EVENTS

well worth the trip out to Ivybridge. See Folk On The Moor's advert on Page 8 for more details.

AND finally, on Tuesday 28th, a visit from one of the editor's favourite bands: the amazing Henhouse Prowlers from the US. Although the boys hail from Chicago, a city best known for jazz and blues, they play bluegrass – but with their own distinctive style which takes in and transforms everything from Bill Monroe to Chuck Berry, Bruce Springsteen and African and Asian folk songs. Their more exotic material was picked up while touring the world through a US State Department scheme to spread American culture internationally. Perhaps our Foreign Office could take a tip from Uncle Sam and start spreading our Devon culture abroad. World Unlimited is putting on the Prowlers at St Mary the Virgin Church, Abbotsbury, Waverley Road, Newton Abbot, TQ12 2ND. For more details, see www.worldunlimited.co.uk

These gig details were believed to be correct as we went to press. Devon Folk is launching a new website to keep the county up to date with events. For details, see the article on Page 37.

The Mooncoin Barn Dance Band



Available for
Wedding Ceilidhs
Birthdays
Anniversaries etc.
Own Caller

Instruments include Melodeon,
Guitar, Bouzouki, Fiddle, Bodhran &
Uilleann Pipes

Available as a 2, 3 or 4 piece band
with caller. For more information
Visit www.flaxey-green.co.uk

To book the band contact:
Anne & Steve Gill 01803 290427
Email: anne.m.gill@icloud.com

or Andy Clarke 07792009374



FOLK ON THE MOOR at The Exchange, Ivybridge



GUEST LIST

- 27 March Johnny Coppin**
10 April Idiot & Friend
24 April Harbottle & Jonas
22 May Magpies
29 May Kenny Speirs
12 June State of the Union
26 June Steve Tilston

Sundays
7.45pm
Unspecified
dates are
Open Nights

For directions or more information ring Anton on 01822 853620, Ben on 01752 708770, Keith on 01752 493360 or check our website: www.moorfolk.co.uk

IT WAS a shot in the arm for the folk scene when Sidmouth held its festival last year but one complaint was that there was no camping.

This year the festival site is open again as is the Bulverton and as usual there is a star-studded line-up featuring Show of Hands, Steeleye Span, Fisherman's

Friends and Kate Rusby. It runs from July 29 to August 5 and we will be providing more details in the next issue of What's Afoot.

In the meantime, keep your eyes on sidmouthfolkfestival.co.uk for more announcements and have a look at these other attractions on offer.

BRIXHAM PIRATE FESTIVAL -

Saturday 30 April to Monday 2 May

HERE is your chance to be a buccaneer for a few days and sing more than a few shanties. Brixham started in 2007 and now attracts piratical types from all over the world. There will be music from Irish band the O'Marleys, Celtic rockers The Dolmen, folk punks Black Friday, The Captain's Beard, The Old Time Sailors and more.

Other attractions include the Trafalgar Gun Company who use reproduction gun-decks, guns on carriers, and artillery to give a small taste of a 19th century naval battle. There will also be a visit from reproduction tall ship Atyla.

For more details, see brixhampirates.com

DART MUSIC FESTIVAL

Friday May 6 to Sunday May 8

NOW in its 23rd year, this festival based in and around Dartmouth is completely free to attend and solely funded by donations and sponsorship. Most musical genres are covered from classical to indie pop. On the folk side are contributions from Jim Causley, The Model Folk from North Somerset, The Captain's Beard, Brother Sea, Keith Christmas, The Harry Browns and more.

See www.dartmusicfestival.co.uk

BUDE LITERARY FESTIVAL

May 18

NOT an event we'd normally include in a folk magazine but it includes the launch of Patrick Gale's novel about Charles Causley, *Mother's Boy*, and of course Jim Causley will be there to

perform some of the poet's works he has set to music. Jim and Patrick will also be appearing at the Bookery in Crediton on June 21 and at the Cornish Bank, Falmouth on June 29. See Jim's website, Jimcausley.co.uk for more details.

BUDE AND STRATTON FOLK FESTIVAL

Thursday May 26 to Monday 30

JUST over the border in Cornwall, this fine festival offers four good days of entertainment. Our Jim Causley is topping the bill along with our Geoff Lakeman and Rob Murch. Sadly, there will be no festival fringe this year. See Budefolkfest.com for more details.

TEIGNMOUTH FOLK FESTIVAL

Friday 17 June to Sunday 19 June

AFTER a two-year gap thanks to covid, Teignmouth is back but, sadly, there will be no camping provided in the town this year. Visitors are urged to make their own arrangements at campsites in the Dawlish and Shaldon area.

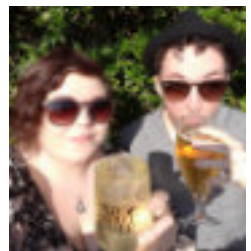
The festival will be hosting the artists who were booked for the cancelled 2020 event and it's a good line-up. Veteran troubador Martyn Wyndham-Read and duet concertina virtuoso Iris Bishop are headlining along with the Wilson family. Local support comes from Jim Causley and Plymouth's Ben Campbell.

There should be a good turnout from morris sides who appreciate the fact that there are so many places around the town to dance.

For more details, see the advert on Page 30 and www.teignmouthfolk.co.uk



THIS year's Bude and Stratton Folk Festival artists include Jonny Dyer and John Dyer. To help tell them apart, Jonny Dyer, left, is left-handed and plays cow horn and accordion. John, right, is right-handed and plays double bass and flute. But don't confuse him with Jonny's wife Vicki, left, who plays bass and flute. Let's hope Hannah Cumming, right, ends up performing with the right Dyer or she'll be in Dyer straits.



A May Day Carol



Awake, ye pretty maids, awake,
Refreshed from drowsy dream,
And haste to dairy house, and take
For us a dish of cream.

If not a dish of yellow cream,
Then give us kisses three.
The woodland bower is white with flower,
And green is every tree.

A branch of May we bear about
Before the door it stands;
There's not a sprout unbudded out,
The work of God's own hands.

Awake, awake ye pretty maids,
And take the May-bush in,
Or 'twill be gone ere tomorrow morn,
And you'll have none within.

THIS song seems most appropriate for the season. It's from Baring-Gould's *Songs Of The West*. The parson was given the tune by Thomas Stollard Cayzer, a schoolmaster who loved Dartmoor and collected this song and several others during walks across the moor.

In his fine book, *As I Walked Out*, Martin Graebe tells us that Cayzer did not get the words but remembered having heard them sung in Melbourn, Cambridgeshire. He travelled all the way there to get the lyrics and sent them to Baring-Gould who decided instead to use a set of lyrics he remembered being sung in his youth.

Throughout the night, before the light,
There fell the dew or rain,
It twinkles bright on May bush white,
It sparkles on the plain.

The heavenly gates are open wide
To let escape the dew,
And heavenly grace falls on each place
It drops on us and you.

The life of man is but a span,
He blossoms as a flower,
He makes no stay, is here to-day,
And vanish'd in an hour.

My song is done, I must be gone,
Nor make a longer stay.
God bless you all, both great and small,
And send you gladsome May.

You could have saved yourself a trip, Thomas. Baring-Gould wrote in 1890: "It was sung, till of late years, in my neighbourhood, where a bunch of flowers at the end of a stick was carried about by children. It was customary in England for a lover on May morning to take a green bough to the house of the beloved. If she opened the door and took it in, this was a token of acceptance"

The parson added that the song could still be heard in parts of Cornwall.

A fine arrangement of this tune for guitar can be found on the CD *Transitions* by Gareth Hedges.

Mandolinist Matt knows his onions

Matt Norman explains why he has recorded a CD of Edwardian album entitled Mr Onion's Serenade

THE last time Matt Norman visited the Dartmoor Folk Festival, 2021's mini-fest, he took the stepdancing title, which proves he has as much talent in his feet as he has in his hands.

For Matt is better known for his mandolin playing and teaching. For many years he was a tutor at Wren Music in Okehampton and set up the Mandolin Orchestra of Devon. You might have heard his contributions to Jim Causley's Devon albums (the latest is reviewed on Page30) or seen him with Gadarene, the band that also features Nick Wyke, John Dyer and Laurel Swift.

Gadarene's funky folk will be heard at this year's Dartmoor Folk Festival but their sound is a far cry from Matt's latest project: an album of Edwardian mandolin orchestral works. In the folk world, the mandolin is usually associated with blazingly fast jigs and reels. Many of us came to it through Dave Swarbrick's *Rags, Reels And Airs* LP so we tend to forget the instrument's classical origins. After all, even Mozart included a mandolin in Don Giovanni (shame on those productions that fake the mandolin part by using pizzicato violins). The mandolin suffered a decline in popularity then a resurgence in the Edwardian era when a huge number of pieces were written for groups of mandolins of all shapes and sizes. Matt chose a selection of the best of these compositions for his album

During lockdown, he had to record all the parts himself (including bass tracks with his wonderful home-made bass banjo put together from a bass



drum and a bass guitar neck). But can Edwardian mandolin arrangements be considered folk music?

Well, the English folk tradition is one of absorbing any good tune. Hence, one of Mozart's *12 German Dances* being relabelled *Michael Turner's Waltz* and turning up in sessions from Penzance to Penrith. There are a couple of tunes on Matt's album that I feel could certainly end up in sessions: *Polka de Moineaux* and *The Lancashire Clog Dancer*.

The clog dance started life as a tune for banjo by Emile Grimshaw, who later arranged it for mandolin orchestra. Devon's banjo supremo Rob

Murch first came across the tune and tipped off Matt. Personally, I'd like to see it returned to the banjo at this year's Dartmoor Festival with Rob Murch playing while Matt stepdances.

The classical sound of Mr Onion's Serenade is a return to Matt's roots. He started off as a classical violinist but his first exposure to folk music was when he was a pupil at Chulmleigh College, where What's Afoot's former editor,



The Mandolin Orchestra of Devon.
For details of how to join, see www.wrenmusic.co.uk

Colin Andrews, was a chemistry teacher. “I went to ceildh’s Colin played for at school, and the music teacher played with him so I played a little bit with them but I didn’t really get into folk music then.”

INSTEAD, he went off to university in Norwich to study classical music, taking with him a mandolin his parents had given him as a present for passing his A-Levels. “In my first year I had to do a performance on the violin which I’d studied for about 10 years. When I’d done it my lecturer said, ‘Well, it’s all right but you’re not really playing the right instrument, you should play the mandolin.’ I said, ‘Well it just so happens I’ve got one’.”

Matt had already fallen in love with the mandolin so the switch wasn’t hard but his repertoire was strictly classical. The next big change in his life occurred when he left university and returned to Okehampton.

“Someone said to my mum, ‘There are people playing music in the Devonshire Inn in Sticklepath. Why doesn’t Matt take his violin along?’ I was completely blown away by the fact that there were people sitting around playing in this generous way for fun rather than the slightly

stuffy way I was used to. The people who were there, the Dartmoor Pixie Band Crowd who run Dartmoor, were my real introduction to folk. I moved to London not long after that and went to a session in Greenwich every week.

“Then I applied for lots of jobs in music and the one I got was with Wren in Okehampton, where my parents live. I ended up back in Devon and have been a professional folk musician ever since.”

At one point he even shared a house in Exeter with Jim Causley and Jackie Oates. You can’t get much more folksy than that.

Sadly, work has taken Matt away from Devon and he’s now living in Wales and teaching in Bristol. Fingers crossed that he will come back here permanently. In the meantime we asked him for some tips on playing the mandolin.

“Get some lessons. The temptation with the mandolin is to be – as I was – self taught, because you can get quite a nice sound out of it immediately. Not like the violin which sounds completely horrible if you don’t know how to play it. But I soon got to a point when I wasn’t getting any better. I had some lessons with Alison Stephens. I didn’t know at the time she was the top mandolinist in the country and she taught me the technique – mostly right hand.” (Mandolin players who aren’t already familiar with the work of Alison Stephens should check out recordings of this talented player who died at the tragically early age of 40 in 2010).

“DON’T clutch the plectrum too hard. People tend to hold it in a death grip – you see white knuckles sometimes.”

Should you read music or play by ear? “Both. Don’t get into using tab because it’s no easier really than reading music. The problem with tab is you can then only read mandolin tab but if you read conventional notation, it opens up all sorts of possibilities.”

Matt’s new CD certainly opens up all sorts of new possibilities for mandolin players. It comes out in May. Find out more at Matt’s website, www.mattnorman.org

And why is it entitled Mr Onion’s Serenade? Track nine is a pretty tune, *Serenata*, by Alfonso Cippolone. Cippolone is a nickname for someone with a big head from *capolla* meaning “onion”. Hence, Mr Onion’s Serenade which is a nicer title than Mr Bighead’s Boogie. And in this CD Matt certainly has something to be – not big-headed about because he is a nice guy – but very, very proud of.

John Foxen

NIGEL STURE CONCERTINAS

“The
Concertina
Doctor ”



Repairs and restoration
Expert tuning, valving, re-padding
Bellows repaired
New bellows made to order
Concertinas also bought and sold

Nigel Sture Concertinas
Hillside Cottage, Frogmore
Kingsbridge, Devon, TQ7 2NR

Tel. 01548 531525

www.concertinas-uk.co.uk

Time to try England's instrument

February 6 was designated World Concertina Day. To mark the event, we spoke to Nigel Sture, squeezebox specialist

THIS year is the 220th anniversary of the birth of Sir Charles Wheatstone, inventor of the English concertina. This is why his birthday, February 6, was designated World Concertina Day. By rights, the concertina should be our national instrument as it was born and bred here. Wheatstone produced his concertina in 1829, five years before a German, Carl Friedrich Uhlig, developed the system we have come to call the Anglo-German. The Anglo may now be a more popular instrument but there is a strong argument that it became so because we took it and improved it to make it the instrument we now know.

Our go-to man for anything to do with concertinas is Nigel Sture, also known as the Concertina Doctor.

Salcombe-born Nigel has been playing and repairing concertinas since 1976 when he bought a concertina in a junk shop. "It didn't play," he says, "so I took it to Dick Cherry in Exeter and he put me right. He told me the keys of D and G were what I needed, and over many visits he also taught me how to tune and repair."

In 1998 he was visiting the Hobgoblin stand at Sidmouth and his wife Sarah made a chance remark that he dabbled a bit. "They sent me a box of 12 concertinas to repair and the rest is history."

His repair business is thriving. "There seems to be a big concertina community in the West country," he says. "For a start, there is the West Country Concertina association."

If you are a concertina player or someone who wants to learn, it's worth checking out this very active group at their website, thewccp.org.

We asked what sort of a concertina he would recommend to a novice. The answer is that it all depends on what sort of music you want to play. "The English is best at playing single line tunes



Harmony at Home: Nigel and Sarah Sture on Anglo and English serenade Tess, their dog

although there are some people who can do wonderful chords." However, there are people who find it hard to grasp the concept that in playing a scale on the English you have to play the notes with alternate hands: G with the right hand, A with the left, B with the right hand, C with the left and so on.

"The Anglo is simple, like a mouth organ once you get used to the idea that the notes will change on a push and pull. It's very popular for Irish music. It's also very good for morris as it can be very rhythmic. I use one to play for Dartington Morris. It's also good for song accompaniment although you are limited in key. However, I get by with a CG and a DG concertina. The trick is not to play the tune so much when you are accompanying a song but try to use more chords."

AMASTER – or rather mistress – of the art of song accompaniment is Iris Bishop, and you have a chance to see her in action with Martyn Wyndham-Read at this year's Teignmouth Folk Festival.

Iris doesn't play an English or an Anglo but a duet. Duets tend to be even more complicated than the English or the Anglo and Iris plays a Maccann, a system that many find fiendishly intricate.

Devon's Geoff Lakeman plays the Crane system, one that Nigel admires because it is reasonably straightforward. He has tried out Cranes while repairing them. "I like the Crane system because it is so simple. I can easily find my way around it. If had started off with a Crane, I would not have moved away from it."

However, he does play both English and Anglo.

"I like the Anglo but I also get a lot of pleasure out of sitting down with my English concertina

Music Notes

and going through tune books. There is a lot of good music on line. For example there is the Session.org.”

So would he advise learning to read music?

“It can be very helpful but it can also be a straitjacket. My advice is that if you find a tune you like, once you’ve tried it, go on to Youtube and see if you can find someone else playing it.”

Where should a beginner go to learn?

“If you want to play English music then joining a morris side is very useful. But if you want to play Irish music, you don’t want to start with morris. You would do better going to sessions and listening then joining in when you can.”

How much should you spend on a concertina?

“Get the best you can afford. A vintage Lachenal is always a good bet. And vintage instruments hold their value. If you don’t get on with the concertina then a vintage instrument will fetch a good price if you sell it on.

“There are a lot of cheap instruments made in China that will be nothing but trouble. The valves will go.

“Having said that, a friend bought a Stagi a while back that is surprisingly well made.

“If you are starting out a basic 20 key Anglo will cost about £250.

“A good vintage instrument may need a few hundred pounds spent on it to get back into decent condition but after that you shouldn’t need repairs for 20 years or so. But concertinas should be regularly played. If a concertina is not played enough then the leather valves will dry out and the bellows will crack.”

This seems a good excuse for dropping everything and playing the concertina because you have to keep it running.

WHAT about the cost of repairs? This can vary but Nigel warns: “Good leather valves are hard to find. I buy in good leather and cut it myself make my own valves.

“On my Facebook page, the Concertina Doctor I have posted a lot of the problems you find.”

Nigel also has a website, www.concertinas-uk.co.uk

Another internet resource is the Facebook page Concertinas Are Cool!

They are indeed. So be cool and patriotic and start playing a concertina today.

John Foxen

Teignmouth Folk Club

The Brass, Hollands Road
Teignmouth TQ14 8SP

First Monday in the Month

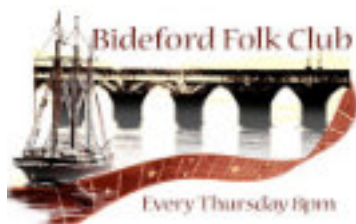
8pm Free admission

Mon 4th April – GUEST NIGHT PAUL DOWNES

Mon 2nd May - Musicians/Singers Open Night

Mon 6th June - Musicians/Singers Open Night

Further details from
Martyn Hillstead
07903 3937812
martyngnh@aol.com



The Joiners Arms

Market Place, Bideford, EX30 2DR

Friendly weekly club – bring a song or tune, join in or just sit and listen. Everyone welcome.
Singarounds most weeks with about eight guests year.
Upstairs in the skit. le alley 7.30 for 8.00pm

April 7th Guests Winter Wilson
April 28th Guests Wildwood Jack
May 26th Guests Harbour Lights
June 16th Guests Na-Mara

Website: www.bidefordfolkclub.com

John Purser
01237 424286
bidefolk@gmail.com



THE SIDMOUTH FOLK FESTIVAL

29TH JULY - 5TH AUGUST 2022

Kate Rusby • Show of Hands
The Spooky Men's Choral
Eddi Reader • Blowzabella

Pre Festival Thursday 28 July Steeleye Span Friday 29 July Fisherman's Friends

Spiers & Boden • Peatbog Faeries • Edward II • Martin Simpson
Grace Petrie • Daoiri Farrell • Yves Lambert Trio • Melrose Quartet
Centralbal • Matt Cranitch & Jackie Daly • Jackie Oates & John Spiers
Chris Wood • Fara • Jez Lowe • Will Pound & Jenn Butterworth
John Kirkpatrick • Alistair Anderson • Sheelanagig • Granny's Attic
Mairearad Green & Anna Massie • Emily Portman & Rob Harbron
Ryan Young • Miranda Sykes & Hannah Martin • Jim Causley
Jack Rutter • Cohen Braithwaite-Kilcoyne • Rosie Hood
Pedler // Russell • Moirai • Hannah Sanders & Ben Savage
Rachel Hair & Ron Jappy • Belinda Kempster & Fran Foote
Bryony Griffith & Alice Jones • Frankie Armstrong

Kirkophany • Cock & Bull Band • Melrose Ceilidh Band
Diatonics • Lasair • Belshazzar's Feast • The Pigeon Swing
Out of Hand • Contrasaurus • Steamchicken
Urban Folk Theory • Threepenny Bit • Nozzy

... and many more

Concerts • Ceilidhs • Folk Dances • Roots Parties
Dance Spectaculars • Children's Festival
Huge Workshop Programme
Shooting Roots and Steam of Sound

**A festival with a view:
a seasidetown set in majestic red
cliffs and a lush green valley**

Early Bird Tickets available now



www.sidmouthfolkfestival.co.uk
or call the Box Office 01395 577952



PENNYMOOR

SEVERAL Pennymoor Singaround members have requested a lunchtime session so here it is. First Thurs each month 12-3pm at the London Inn, Morchard Bishop. The pub has a reputation for it's food and there will be a break for lunch so come and enjoy a weekday treat.

The other song and music sessions are going well. The upstairs room at the Lamb Inn, Sandford has great acoustics so do come along on the third Wednesday in the month and give it a try. Pennymoor members Paul Watts and Hazel Underwood also run a session in the bar at the Lamb on the first Tuesday of the month and celebrated the 10th birthday of Sandford Folk recently.

Another trip to the Lizard for a youth hostel weekend took place in March and the return of Song and Ale weekend, at the London Inn, is eagerly awaited after a two-year absence. This will happen a week later than usual on June 10-12 because of the Queen's Jubilee weekend the week before.

The annual Jan Stewer evening of Devon tales and songs will be held on July 22. So plenty going on and plenty to look forward to.

EXMOUTH

AFTER our two-month self-imposed Omicron lockdown, we got back in the saddle on Sunday February 27 at the Railway Club, 3-5 Royal Avenue, EX8 1EN. Join us there on the fourth Sunday of the month from 7pm until 10pm

TOTNES

WE'RE delighted the new landlord at the Dartmouth Inn has welcomed the folk club. Numbers are gradually increasing for our singers nights since we reopened after the Covid break. The February meeting had 15 performers so things are looking up for us.

FOLK ON THE MOOR

FOLK on the Moor continues to thrive following its move to The Exchange in Ivybridge last October. "We're not only drawing excellent audiences on our guest nights," said Anton Horwich, "but our open nights are attracting new singers from the local area. We were uncertain how things would go when the Club reopened, once Covid restrictions were lifted, but we've been thrilled by the response."

The Club had a full house of almost 100 for a recent gig by Phil Beer and guests are now being booked well into 2023.

We look forward to welcoming you to

Brixham Folk Club

We meet at 7.30pm on the 1st Friday of every month at
The Trawler Pub, 66 North Boundary Road,
Brixham, TQ5 8LA

Singers, musicians of all levels welcome, along with anyone who
loves folk music and just wants to join us.

Contact Mark & Jo on mnharrod@yahoo.co.uk with any queries

What's On Where

THE latest listings appear in the following section. We try to keep up to date but events can be subject to change due to all sorts of factors at the best of times and there is still the possibility of Covid restrictions being reintroduced. Do check before setting off, either by ringing the organisers or going to the venue's website.

If no contact details have been provided, an excellent reference point is the flaxey-green website www.flaxey-green.co.uk

Contact details for clubs, bands and callers and diary dates for regular and specific events are now being coordinated by Trevor

Paul. Any information sent to diary@devonfolk.org.uk or trevor@flaxey-green.co.uk will be shared between Devon Folk publications (What's Afoot and website) and the flaxey-green website.

The details in this section are believed to be correct at the time of compilation. The editor cannot accept responsibility for changes by club organisers or because of unforeseen events.

Our Devon Folk website www.devonfolk.org has the latest updates we have been given. We ask that organisers notify us immediately of any changes to contact details for clubs etc.

Exeter Folk & Acoustic Music Club

Victoria Park Tennis Club, Lyndhurst Road, St. Leonards, Exeter,
EX2 4NX – 8.00pm

Friday 22nd April

Friday 29th April

Friday 13th May

Friday 27th May

Friday 24th June

Concert Night: Mike Silver

Open Club Night

Concert Night: Johnny Coppin

Open Club Night

Open Club Night

NO CLUB NIGHT IN JULY - SUMMER BREAK

For more information contact
The Cornelius Family – exeterfolkclub@outlook.com - Tel. 01392 210983

Song and Music

Folk song clubs and sessions are some mes forced to change venue at short notice due to change in management at a pub. Please check if in doubt. See www.devonfolk.org for updates.

AWLISCOMBE NR HONITON

2nd Wednesday Jurrassic Folk Honiton Inn Awliscombe, EX14 3PJ. 01404 549903 or 01404 43429

BIDEFORD

Thursday. Bideford Folk Club* Joiners Arms – John Purser 01237 424286 or email bidefolk@gmail.com. See advert on Page 14

BISHOPSTEIGNTON

Wednesday 7.30pm. Red Rock Brewery, John Morey 07791 054773.
www.oldworkshop.org.

BODMIN

Friday: Bodmin Folk Club. The Old Library, 10 Lower Bore Street, Bodmin, PL31 2JX (at the top of Fore Street)
www.bodminfolk.co.uk

BRIXHAM

1st Friday. Brixham Folk Club. The Trawler Pub, 66 North Boundary Road, Brixham, TQ5 8LA See advert Page 16

BUCKLAND MONACHORUM

2nd Sunday 7.30pm. Music and song session. The Drake Manor Inn, The Village, Buckland Monachorum, PL20 7NA

1st Wednesday 8.30pm. Music session The Drake Manor Inn

COLEFORD

Last Tuesday 8pm. The New Inn Dave 01363 84914

CHERITON FITZPAINE

Last Sunday Noon. Half Moon Inn. Clare Penny 01884 860023

CHIPSHOP (NR TAVISTOCK)

4th Tuesday 8pm. Song and music session. Copper Penny Inn, PL19 8NT (01822 833288, 07725 579718)

miJlmusic@gmail.com

COLEFORD

Last Tuesday: Singaround 8pm The New Inn Coleford, Crediton EX17 5BZ Tel: Dave 01363 84914

CREDITON

West Gallery Quire. Ring Sonja Andrews 01363 877216 to check day

CULLOMPTON

3rd Friday and 5th Sunday: South West Shape Note Singing, Steve 07976 605692 or Marj n 07721 451406

DARTINGTON

Last Monday: 7pm New Lion Brewery, Meadowbrook, Dartington, TQ9 6JD. Mark Jefferys markjefferys7@gmail.com

ERMINGTON

Last Monday: 8pm Crooked Spire Inn, The Square, Ermington PL21 9LP. Acousŷ c session "Country meets Folk".

EXETER

Last Wednesday: 7.30pm Cornish and Devonian Folk Music Session (and some tunes from elsewhere). The Mount Radford, 73-75 Magdalen Rd, Exeter EX2 4TA

Last Friday: Exeter Folk & Acousŷ c Music Club Victoria Park Tennis Club, St Leonards Peter Cornelius 01392 210983 www.exeterfolkclub.org
See advert Page 17

EXMOUTH

4th Sunday: 7pm. Exmouth Folk Club GWRSA Railway Club 3-5 Royal Avenue, EX8 1EN. Chris Ausŷ n 07812 688432

1st Thursday 7.45pm Bicton Inn Folk session 01395 272589

3rd Thursday 8.30pm Bicton Inn Folk session 01395 272589. Becky Brooks

4th Thursday 8.30pm Bicton Inn Folk club night 01395 272589. Derek Brooks

GIDLEIGH

1st Tuesday or 1st Wednesday

8pm. Gidsong. Gidleigh Village Hall. Check Gidleigh Village Hall Facebook page for date..

IPPLEPEN

4th Tuesday: Shape Note singing Methodist Church, East Street, Ipplepen, TQ12 5SX jeremyjamesdonaldson@gmail.com

IVYBRIDGE

Sunday: Folk On The Moor 7.45pm The Exchange 1-3 Fore Street, PL21 9AB. Anton Horwich, 4, The Green, Milton Combe, Yelverton, 01822 853620 See advert Page 8

KINGSTEIGNTON

1st Wednesday: 7.30 pm Acousŷ c Warehouse – Music & Performance Club, Estuary Courtyard, Passage House Inn. Nigel 07989 180091

LYMPSTONE

4th Wednesday Lympstone Folk, Roots and Acousŷ c, Redwing Inn. Church Rd, EX8 5JT. 01395 225075/ 07741409265

MARLDON

3rd Friday Ye Olde Smokey House, Vicarage Road, TQ3 1NN. Folk Plus Acousŷ c Music Club. Paul 07894 961010

MILTON COOMBE

Alt Tuesdays: 7.30pm. American Roots song and tune session. The Who'd Have Thought It Inn, PL20 6HP marJnr.54@virgin.net

PLYMOUTH

1st and 3rd Tuesday. The Arŷllery Arms. Mixed song and instrument session Marilyn Cowan 01752 309983

SCORITON

4th Sunday: 7.30pm. Singaround Tradesman's Arms Sue & Simon Williams, Scorrilton Farmhouse.

SOUTH BRENT

3rd Thursday: Pack Horse Inn, 8pm. Mixed session. mickbramich@gmail.com

Song and Music

ST DOMINICK

2nd Saturday Who'd Have Thought It Inn, St Dominick, Saltash PL12 6TG Mike 07725 579718

SANDFORD

1st Tuesday 8pm Lamb Inn Paul & Hazel 01363 776275
3rd Wednesday 7.30pm Lamb Inn Jon Shapely 0136383740 jon_shapley@hotmail.com

SIDMOUTH

Sidmouth Acouŝc Folk Club, The Blue Ball, EX10 9QL third Monday. Hugh Sutherland, 01395 514618

SOUTH ZEAL

3rd Mon music session markbazeyleymobile@gmail.

com

STICKLEPATH (OKEHAMPTON)

1st Sunday 8pm. Singaround. Devonshire Inn. Derek Moore 01837 840316

STOKE CANNON

Stoke Cannon Inn nr Exeter. 4th Wednesday 8.30pm. Paul and Alison 07709324836

TEIGNMOUTH

First Monday Teignmouth Folk Club. The Brass, Hollands Road, TQ14 8SP Martyn Hillstead, 01626 778071. Advert Page 8

TOPSHAM

Monthly Monday Session. Maøhews Hall, 38 High Street, Topsham, Exeter EX3 0HF Weekly Tuesdays Song.

Maøhews Hall, 38 High Street, Topsham, Exeter EX3 0HF Monthly Concert. Maøhews Hall, Fore Street, Topsham, EX3 0HF See advert Page 40.

TOTNES

2nd Thursday: Folk Song Club. Dartmouth Inn. Steve & Anne Gill, 01803 290427. See advert page 23

1st & 3rd Tuesday. Bay Horse. Music Song session (English)
2nd & 4th Tuesday. Bay Horse. Music session (Irish)

WILLAND

Alt. Thurs. Willand Club Band Workshop Willand Chapel, Gables Road. Mary Marker 01626 854141

Social Dance Clubs

BIDEFORD

Bideford Country Dance Club, Northam Hall, Fore St, Northam, Bideford EX39 1AN. Fridays 8pm. Telephone in advance to check details: 01237 476632.

Bideford Folk Dance Club, Northam Hall, Fore St, EX39 1AN. Wednesdays (From last in September to first in May) Telephone 01237 423554.

BRIDPORT

Bridport Folk Dance Club, WI Hall, North Street, DT6 3NW. Mondays except holidays. 7.15pm. Gwenda or Mike. 01308 863552.

DARTINGTON

Dar ngton Folk Dance Club, Dar ngton Village Hall. Fridays 8pm. Telephone 01626 834981.

EXMOUTH

Exmouth Folk Dance Club, Withycombe Methodist Church Centre, 5 Regents Gate, EX8 1TR. Thursday (1st and 3rd) 8pm September to June. 01395 275592.
Exmouth Isca Scoñ sh

Dancers, East Budleigh Village Hall, Wynard Road, EX9 7DU. Wednesdays 10am. Mr & Mrs VJ Tyler 01395 276913

Exmouth Playford Club, East Budleigh Church Hall, Budleigh Salterton. 2nd Sunday. 2.30pm. Telephone Mr & Mrs VJ Tyler 01395 276913

GITTISHAM

GiÑ sham Folk Dance Club, GiCesham Village Hall, EX14 3AF. Usually Wednesdays. 8pm Telephone Rosemary 01395 515403.

LAUNCESTON

Launceston Folk Dance Club, St John's Ambulance Hall. Weekly on Tuesdays 8pm Not July and August. Telephone Rosemary 01566 774491. See advert page

NEWTON ABBOT

Newton Abbot Irish Set Dance, Jolly Farmer, 8 Market Street, TQ12 2RB. Wednesdays. Telephone 01626204350.

PLYMOUTH

Country Dance Plymouth, Trinity United Reform Church Hall, Tor Lane, Hartley, PL3 3NY.

Tuesdays, 8pm – not June, July and August. 01752 774484.

SIDFORD

Sidford Folk Dance Club, Sidford Social Hall, Byes Lane EX10 9QX. Tuesdays 8pm September to May. 01395 514161 or 01395 568336.

SOUTH HAMS

South Hams Folk Dance Club, West Charleton Village Hall TQ7 2AG. Wednesdays 7.45pm September to April. Philip 01548 561415.

TAVISTOCK

Tavistock Folk Dance Club, Tavistock Town Hall, Bedford Square, PL19 0AU. Thursdays 8pm. Not June, July and August. Telephone 01822 855858.

WILLAND

Willand Folk Dance Club, Willand Village Hall, Gables Road, Willand, EX15 2PL. Thursday (2nd and 4th) 8pm. Telephone 01844 253546 or 01404 47200. See advert Page 28.

Morris and Display Teams

(F - Morris Federation, R Morris Ring, Open Morris)
 Day: regular meetings
Alive & Kicking (F)
 Appalachian. Jo Wright
 01392 462531
AngleTwitch (F)
 Elizabeth Wozniak 01271 325425
Beltane (F)
 Border, Harriet White.
 harrietcewhite@yahoo.co.uk
Bideford Phoenix Morris (F)
 Frances Hall, 01409 281877
Blackawton Morris (F)
 Chris Janman, 01803 712362
Black Bess (F)
 Jayne Thomas 01626 366844
 blackbessborder@gmail.com
Borderline (F)
 bag@borderlinemorris.org
Bovey Tracey Mummers (R)
 Rod Wilkins 01803 812581
Bradninch Millers Morris (F)
 Duncan Harrington 01884
 855270
Catseye Morris (F)
 Tues Catseyebag@aol.com
 www.catseyemorris.co.uk
Cogs & Wheels (F)
 Donna Tombs
 dtombs65@gmail.com (Thurs)
Dartmoor Border (F)
 Wed Mark Tregaskis 01752
 299700
Dartington Morris Men (R)
 Marj n Jones
 bagman@dartingtonmorrismen.
 org.uk (Fri)
Exeter Morris Men (R)
 Mike Painter, 01392 660444.

mikepainter25@gmail.com,
 Thurs.
Firestone
 (Appalachian & Irish). Email
 info@firestonedance.co.uk
Glory of the West Morris (F)
 Sally Landberger
 01626 863829
 gloryoPhewest@gmail.com
 (Wed)
Great Western Morris Men (F)
 bagman@greatwestern.org.uk
 (Thur)
Green Willow Clog (F)
 Jacqueline 07748 121093
**Grimspound Border
 Morris (F)**
 Lee Merry, 8, Waterside,
 Bovey Tracey, TQ139SX
 lmerry@live.co.uk
Harberton Navy (F)
 David Beavis
 davidbeavis@scali.co.uk
Ilfracombe Red Peñ coats (F)
 Linda Corcoran,
 lindacorcoran@btopenworld.com
Isambard Gasket Rats (F)
 bag@isambardsgasketrats.co.uk
Lodestone Border (F)
 lodestonemorris@
 hotmail.co.uk (Thurs)
Lyme Morris
 www.facebook.com/LymeMorris
Majidah Tribal Belly Dance
 majidah925@gmail.com
Newton Bushel Morris (F)
 Rod Shute, 01803 403153
 rod@newtonbushelmorris.uk
Old Town Twelves
 Alison Chapman, 07541 385463

Older Morris
 bag.ofer.morris@gmail.com
Plymouth Clog (O)
 Sue Hawes, 01752 345054
 plymouthmaids@hotmail.com
Plymouth Morris
 bagman@plymouthmorris.uk
 www.plymouthmorris.uk
Raddon Hill Clog Morris (F)
 Triss Cummings 01626 376173
Rough Diamonds Appalachian
 01460 220607
Shuffle The Deck (F)
 Appalachian. Kathy Houlihan
 01752 893335 or 07719 652885
**Sidmouth Steppers NW
 Morris (F)**
 cath.neleton@gmail.com
**Sidmouth Traditional
 Mummers** Henry Piper, 21B,
 Broad Street, Obery St Mary,
 01404 811491
 henry.piper@zoom.co.uk
Tinners Morris Men (F)
 andrew@frangleton.co.uk
Trigg Morris Men (R)
 Roger Hancock, 01208 73907
Tudor Dance Group
 Mrs Elizabeth Thurgood,
 Treetops, 7 Pothers Close,
 West Hill, Obery St Mary,
 EX11 1YE, 01404 812185 (Sat)
Winkleigh Morris (F)
 Angela Haines, Hollaco, Hollcombe,
 Chulmleigh
 EX18 7QE 01837 83219
 daveyhaines@btinternet.com
 (Tues)
Wreckers Border (F)
 wreckers.bag@gmail.com Thurs

Bands

* EFDSS affiliated.

Abacus mason.je@btconnect.com
 Amber Fire 01803 862393
 Barnstormers 01392 882036
Blue Jewel 07957 855458
See advert on Page 26
 Bridgwater Band 01278 691370
 Choughed to Bits 01752 851990
 Chris Toyne Band
 chris.toyne@btinternet.com
 Dartmoor Pixie Band*
 01837 840775

Dancing Keys 01884 820438
 Eel Grinders 01647 440020
 Flash Company 01392 851496
 Flash Jack 01566 785233
 Folk Two 01548 550004
 Fox Amongst The Chickens
 01566 785233
 Fraich 'Airs'* 01392 811593
 Fresh Aire 01823 257488
 Full English 01271 866907
 Haymakers 01288 361625
 Hips & Haws 01392 861466

Hobson's Choice 01823 272537
 Home Brew 01363 877216
 Hot Punch 01271 373128
 Lucy Lasj c 01884 258892
 Mischief & Mayhem*
 01395 514291
 Mist The Boat 01409 211340
Mooncoin Ceilidh Band*
01803 290427
See advert on Page 38
 More The Merrier 01626 854141
 Mrs Midnight's 07469 773353

Bands

Mugdock 01643 707294
See advert on Page 32
 Mullachabu 01626 871260
 New Vintage Band 01363 774426
 Occasion Ceilidh Band
 01752 337501
 Oggle Band* 01271 865030
 Old Boys 01726 837432
 Other Band 01326 563564
 Paddy's Whiskers*01803 520798
 Park Bench Aristocrats
 01548 810038

Petronella 01626 854141
 Pigs Might Fly 01392 465462
 Pig's Whisper 01392 250355
 Piping Hot 01803 528234
 Phoenix 07971220462
 Rakes AdriP 01271 865030
 Red Shed 01363 774339
 Reel Thing 01460 240671
 Scratchbox 01803 847689
 Sheer Hopody 01769 520595
 Slack Ma Girdle 01823 680523
 Spinach For Norman

07970 151059
 Squeezum 01823 333567
 Steve Gill & Andy Clarke
 01803 290427

S ck The Fiddle
01884 255356 or 07790 760462
See advert on Page 23
 Tinnars 01736 787951
 Up The Creek 01548 531525
 Walter Shortage & Hosepipe
 Band 01837 52174
 Winkeilidh Band 01363 877216

Callers

Tom Addison
 hawkes1880@yahoo.co.uk
 Andy Clarke 01803 732312
 or 07792009374
 Colin Andrews 01363 877216
 Steve Banks 01803 782219
 Graham BarreØ 01823 461632
 Sarah Bazeley 01837 840775
 Robert Blackborow
 01278 691370
 John Blackburn 01237 476632
 Adrian Brayley 07791703009
 Linda Breeze 01363 776184

Les Burden 01840 261708
 Dick Carlyon 01458 272933
Jeremy Child
01392 422119
See advert on Page 29
 Sarah Clough
 www.facebook.com/callersarah
 Ted Farmer 01392 466326
 Ray Goodswen 01278 424332
 Sue Hamer-Moss 01769
 560708
 Susan Heard 01823 462936
 Gil Jefferies 01752 844138

Chris Jewell 01237 423554
 Beryl Jukes 01209 712357
 Graham Knight 01823 401271
 Rosie Longhurst 01566 785233
 Simon Maplesden 01884 33571
 Mary Marker 01626 854141
 Richard Mason 07900 588713
 Barry Moule 01288 361625
 Mike Palmer 01647 433464
 Kate Powell 01626 866257
 Kip PraØ 07969123346
 Garry Thompson 01271 865030
 Helen Wilson 01392 882036

Useful Contacts

FOLK IN CORNWALL

John Tremaine, 7, The Moors, Lostwithiel,
 PL22 0BX 01208 872124
 mail@folkincornwall.co.uk

FOLKLIFE

Sam Simmons, 16, BarreØ Rise, Malvern, WR14
 2UJ. 01684 561378 sam@folklife.co.uk
 www.folklife.org.uk, www.folklife-directory.uk

FOLK LONDON

Email: editor@folklondon.co.uk
 www.folklondon.co.uk

FOLK SOUTH WEST

Eddie Upton, Church Farm, Leigh, Sherborne,
 DT9 6HL. 01935 873889 folksw@folksw.org.uk

SOMERSET & DORSET

www.folkmusic Somerset.co.uk
 www.sadfolk.co.uk Tony & Peter's Folk Diary,
 email for list:
 sancho Bramble@hotmail.com

UNICORN (BEDS, HERTS, CAMB. AREA)

Simon Bailes, 10 Chapel Street, Dunton,
 Biggleswade Bedfordshire SG18 8RW Tel:01767
 310424 unicornmagazine@hotmail.co.uk

ENGLISH FOLK DANCE & SONG SOCIETY

Cecil Sharp House, 2, Regents Park Road,
 London, NW1 7AY. 020 7485 2206.
 info@efdss.org www.efdss.org

THE MORRIS FEDERATION

Fee Lock, 28, Fairstone Close, Hasŷ ngs,
 Sussex. 01424 436052. www.morrisfed.org.uk

THE MORRIS RING

Peter Ausŷ n bagman@themorrisring.org
 01926 339351 g

OPEN MORRIS

HeØy Bevington email secretary@open-
 morris.org

NATIONAL YOUTH FOLKLORE TROUPE OF ENGLAND

www.nyPe.org.uk

IF YOUR DETAILS CHANGE, PLEASE EMAIL DEVONFOLKEDITOR@GMAIL.COM

Pennymoor Singaround

Song and Music Sessions
The Lamb, Sandford - 3rd Wednesday 7.30pm

1st Thursday – 12 noon
Contact Jon Shapley for venue

Music Session - last Sunday 12 noon
The Half Moon, Cheriton Fitzpaine
Contact: Clare Penny – 01884860023

Visit Facebook: Pennymoor Singaround
Biddy Mallabone: 01271 373305
biddy.mallabone@outlook.com
Jon Shapley: 01363 83740 – jon_shapley@hotmail.com

Also run by Pennymoor members:

The Lamb, Sandford, Nr. Crediton – 1st Tuesday 8.00pm
Contact: Hazel or Paul 01363 776275

The New Inn, Coleford – Last Tuesday 8.00pm
Contact: Dave 01363 84914

Stoke Canon Inn, Nr Exeter - 4th Wednesday 8.30pm
Paul and Alison 07709324836

The Devonshire Inn, Sticklepath- 1st Sunday 8.00pm
Contact: Derek 01837 840316

Exmoor is no more

Foreman BARRIE CANN tells their story

EXMOOR Border Morris are sad to announce that we have been forced to fold. Formed in 1998, EBM have been a prominent sight at venues around North Devon, and at numerous festivals over the years, including Dartmoor, Swanage, Wimborne, and Sidmouth.

We have also attended numerous invitational tours on other sides' weekends of dance, including Carn Brae, Quayside Cloggies, and Foxs Morris. Notable for our bright blue raggy jackets, precise, energetic performance and some amazing hats, we have had a ball over the past 20-odd years. And we have made so many friends throughout the Morris community, most of whom couldn't understand why we were always looking for the nearest tea and cake shop, not pub!

We are proud to have created our signature dance, "Porlock Hill" which we know has been



borrowed with our blessing by a number of teams, including a massed performance at a festival in the USA.

But all good things must come to an end, and it is with heavy hearts, creaking knees, birthdays (with big numbers!) and an (un)healthy dose of ailments that we have decided to hang up our bells. So thanks to all who have enjoyed watching us. We will all miss the buzz.

Totnes Folk Club

Dartmouth Inn, The Plains
Totnes, TQ9 5EL



2nd Thursday in the Month – Spm

The new owners of the
Dartmouth Inn welcome
the Folk Club.

2nd Thursday of the month

For more information contact

Andy: ndclarke6@gmail.com

Anne: anne.m.gill@icloud.com

Steve & Anne Gill

01803 290427

or Andy Clarke 01803 732312

Stick The Fiddle

Folk Band



Experienced & Lively Trio

**Fiddle – Guitar – Bass
(Caller Available)**

Dances – Ceilidhs – Concerts

**Background music at
Weddings, Parties or any event
where you'd like live music!**

**More info + YouTube links at
www.stickthefiddle.co.uk
or call Sue 07790760462
Email: stickthefiddle@gmail.com**

Paul Walker & Karen Pfeiffer

New Album

'Auf Wiedersehen, Me Duck'

Out in Spring 2022



Innovative acoustic folk & beyond

enchanting ★ entertaining ★ uplifting

www.paulwalkermusic.co.uk

Are we ready for a ceilidh comeback?

Caller and ceilidh organiser JEREMY CHILD sees light ahead as restrictions are lifted

SO... WE DECIDED to go ahead. There were 41 people at our first dance, precautions in place, and... it was amazing! Mrs Midnight's started us off in October, with Pete Langley calling. Enough people to give it a good atmosphere but not so many that you felt crowded or in danger of being breathed on. A mixture of young and old dancers, quite a bit of hand sanitising, I think out of an abundance of caution, but no one wishing to wear a mask. People stopped worrying and had a good time.

All well and good, so along comes November with our old friends Spinach for Norman. Another cracking evening, with 44 dancers.

The folk clubs got going again as well. Willand had been running club nights and Saturday Dances (including an excellent one with the incomparable Geoff Cubitt). Gittisham started up in January and Sidford were aiming for February.

Then came Omicron. The uncertainty was back. Would people come to dances? Would clubs hold them? Public dances were cancelled – Willand's Spinach for Norman ceilidh and Gittisham's Dartmoor Pixie Band event. I think it was more about whether enough people would come than concern about Covid spreading.

So I'm now faced with a decision: do I go ahead with January's dance? The band (Pixies) were happy and I'm not one to give in easily. I decided it was up to people to come if they wanted. . If they come, they accept the risk.

So we went ahead, and come they did. Fifty dancers. An evening full of smiles and laughter, high spirits, and a lot of dancing.

And so far (and I know I'm asking for trouble here), not one person has come back and said they tested positive for Covid afterwards from any dance I have run.

What is noticeable is the age profile of the dancers – much more towards the younger end of the spectrum. It seems many of our old stalwarts are not yet ready to come back. Getting

younger people in and dancing is brilliant news for the future, especially as they keep coming back. Looking forward to when our "regulars" feel able to join us again.

ZENA ROBERTS writes: Willand started back again in November, both with club nights and our Saturday dances. Numbers are down. Our Saturday dances averaged around 40. On New Year's Eve we had only 27 people but we danced our socks off. We hoped our Ceilidh in January would draw more people to the club but we had to cancel it. However, we have a new programme and hopefully we will not have to cancel any more events due to covid. See our advert on Page 28.

LAUNCESTON FOLK DANCE CLUB 2022

Tuesday Club Nights
8.00 – 10.00 pm (Not July & August)

St. John Ambulance Hall

Saturday Dances 8.00 – 11.30pm

Launceston Town Hall, PL15 7AR

Saturday 23RD April 2022

**Sadly, due to the current
high rate of covid in
Cornwall, the committee
have decided to cancel
the April dance**

**5th NOVEMBER 2022 DANCE
BAND DETAILS TO BE CONFIRMED**

For further information ring
Rosemary Phillips
01566 774491

Sidford celebrates a delayed diamond

HELEN GREER takes a look at her club's 61-year history and gets ready to party

SIDFORD Folk Dance Club celebrates its Diamond Anniversary in April. Thanks to last year's Covid restrictions the celebrations are a year late – the club was founded in 1961 – but a good time is assured at a special dance at Sidford Social Hall on April 5 with Jane Thomas calling, accompanied by Chris Toyne.

Although the club dates back to 1961, folk dancing in the area appears to have been initiated by Mrs Doris Moore, the vicar's wife at Salcombe Regis in 1947 when she held a dance in the local school room.

More interest was generated by the first Sidmouth Folk Festival in 1955 when 100 dancers were based at Connaught Gardens. There were processions along the front and spectators were encouraged to dance.

Sidmouth College was running evening classes and we believe this led to the setting up of our club at Sidford Social Hall.

Frank and Jill Burke were running the club when I joined in the late Eighties and it was struggling at the time. We will always be grateful for the kindness of Muriel Forrest and Harry and June Turner, who, on alternate weeks offered their services as callers for free to enable the club to continue.

I remember we were all delighted when Edwin Purchase, a farmer, brought along lambs that needed care. More animal antics were provided by callers Eileen and Stan Nicholls with their pet dog, who became part of the entertainment.

Edwin and his wife Phyllis were also neighbours of Simon Maplesden, whom they encouraged to join Sidford. His personality enlivened our evenings and his talent for calling has given us many enjoyable events.

Alan and Beryl Bacon introduced social skittle evenings which non-dancing partners were encouraged to attend. We began dancing at outside events: on the lawns at nursing homes, at fetes and, under the direction of Andrew of the Amycrofters, at local scarecrow festivals where

we dressed the part. Eileen Nightingale and Colin Osborne ran the club for a short while and Eileen's contacts in the folk world brought many new bands and callers to us. Led by Eileen, we danced for fun on the seafront as a group at the Sidmouth Folk Festival 15 years ago.

The callers and the bands we have had over the years are too numerous to mention although Peter Moxon stands out as the perfect coach for newcomers. Ted, Farmer, Pete Mac and Nicole, Jane Thomas and Brian were all regular callers and treasured supporters, while Ivor Hyde and Holly were regular bands, especially for party nights.

OVER the years our dances have provided the setting for friendship, romance, weddings, birthdays, anniversaries and themed evenings – especially Valentine's Day, any excuse for a bit of nonsense.

In the early 2000s we had well over 100 members with an average number of 60 per evening. We are looking at less than half that number now but we make up for it with enthusiasm and hope to attract new members. So you are welcome to join our Diamond celebration on April 5.

Blue Jewel Ceilidh Band

**"THE MOST ENJOYABLE
AND HAPPY PARTY WE
HAVE EVER HAD. WE
DANCED OUR HEARTS OUT!"**



www.bluejewel.info

NEW FOREST
FOLK
FESTIVAL

July 6 - 10 (2022)

Powells Farm, Plaitford, Romsey Hampshire, SO51 6EE

Join us for
Our 10th Anniversary



"New Forest 10th Anniversary Band" - Lindisfarne - Ralph McTell
Merry Hell - Joe Broughton's Conservatoire Folk Ensemble
Chris Leslie - Reg Meuross - Ric Sanders Trio - Wilson & Wakeman - Track Dogs
Janet Dowd & Brendan Goff - Alden, Patterson & Dashwood - Hunter Muskett
Jez Lowe & The Bad Pennies - Jigantics - Kathryn Roberts & Sean Lakeman - Green Diesel
Edwina Hayes - Tom Leary & Kevin Dempsey - Matt Black - Folk Camps Party Band - Southampton Ukulele Jam

Adult 5 Day Ticket (Wed - Sun) £105

Children 5 - 15 years of age half price, under 5 free
Motorhomes, Caravans & Tents £8 per pitch per night

Day Tickets - Check website for latest news



**Small Family Run
Folk Festival
With Camping**

**Delicious Home
Cooked Food
Real Ale, Wine
& Somerset Cider**



Live Music - Singarounds - Workshops - Dancing - Meditation & More

Wednesday - Singaround
Morris Dancing & BBQ



Thursday - Local
Artist Showcase
on Main Stage

Enjoy a variety of
free workshops



www.newforestfolkfestival.co.uk



Club pays tribute to caller Doreen

DOREEN COOPER, who for many years ran the Salcombe Regis Folk Dance Club, is to be commemorated with a celebration dance evening in November, writes *Helen Greer*.

Doreen, who lived in Sidford, passed away on November 11, 2021, the eve of her 89th birthday. It was also 19 years to the day that her husband Albert died.

She had been a teacher in Northampton, where she taught her pupils and country dancing and put on dance displays. Doreen had also been involved with Sidmouth Folk Festival and on retirement in 1990, she and Albert moved to Sidmouth. Their passion was dancing and they took over the Salcombe Regis Folk Dance Club from Irene Cannings. Doreen was a highly respected caller and had strong links with the Exmouth club. She was always generous in passing on her knowledge to newcomers. In later

life, she met her companion Edward Read at a folk dance in Offwell.

At her funeral, at St Nicholas Parish Church, Coombe Raleigh, Lord Of The Dance was the recessional. I think Doreen will be remembered as Lady of the Dance.

At the request of Doreen's daughters, Sarah, Laura and Belinda, donations made at the funeral were divided between the British Heart Foundation and Sidford Folk Dance Club (the Salcombe Regis club folded a few years ago).

As a tribute to Doreen, the Sidford club decided to hold the dance in her honour on Saturday November 12 this year, her 90th birthday. Her daughters hope to attend with their families.

It will be held at Sidmouth Social Hall and Janet Bulpin will be using Doreen's favourites recordings and her calling cards.

WILLAND FOLK DANCE CLUB

SATURDAY DANCES

Willand Village Hall

April 2 nd	Jane Thomas & Jewells & Jones
May 7 th	Ray Goodswen & Falconers
June 11 th	Brian Stanton & Deo Volente
July 2 nd	Frances Oates & Jovial Crew

Admission £8.00 Bring & share supper Raffle
Contact: Zena Roberts 01884 253546 www.willandfolkdanceclub.co.uk

Club Nights 2nd & 4th Thursdays 8.00 – 10.30pm in the Village Hall
Members £3.50 / Non-members £4.00 – See Diary Dates for more information
Contact Marilyn Broom 01404 47200 or Zena Roberts 01884 253546

Jeremy Child

Barn Dance Caller



Experienced caller provides lively dancing to recorded music or live band.

"So many people said it was the best wedding do they'd ever been to. You really made our day - thank you"
Barry & Sue Wakefield

"A superb caller and a bundle of fun to boot - he made our party go with a swing"
John Kelly

"Everyone had a great time from young to old and it was a great way for our guests to mingle and break the ice. Jeremy was a brilliant and enthusiastic caller."
Alex and Rhian Hamilton

www.barndancecaller.net

01392 422119 jeremy.m.child@gmail.com

Exeter Ceilidhs

Apr 30th Amber Fire

May 28th Chris Toyne's Big Band

June 25th Home Brew

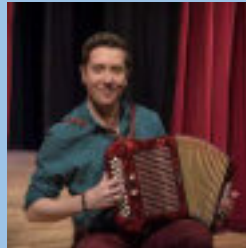
Kenn Centre, Kennford 8pm – 11pm £8

07969 297 633 www.exeterceilidhs.net





22nd Teignmouth Folk Festival 17th – 19th June 2022



Martyn Wyndham-Read & Iris Bishop
The Wilson Family, Jim Causley, Ben Campbell
Fox Amongst the Chickens Ceilidh Band
The New Scorpion Band, Mother's Ruin

The City of Plymouth Pipe Band
Dance displays and lots more to be confirmed

www.teignmouthfolk.co.uk

Contact: Anne Gill 01803 290427

Triple triumph for Jim

Jim Causley's new double CD, *Devonia*, rounds off his collection of Devonshire songs. BILL MURRAY reviews the latest offering and its place in the singer's work

WELL, now I have the complete set, Dumnonia, Devonshire Roses and the newly released *Devonia*, the latest of Jim Causley's trilogy of recordings celebrating the songs of Devon.

This is the first time that such a compilation has been made and I must say that it is long overdue. The folk song collector Charles H Laycock, who, like Jim, recognised the cultural importance of recording the music of his time for the benefit of future generations, provided in *The Devonian Year Book* of 1915, "a list of modern West-country songs, which may be of interest to West-country readers". His list, which included the titles of 35 printed songs from Devonshire, was certainly of interest to me and Jim Causley one hundred years later.

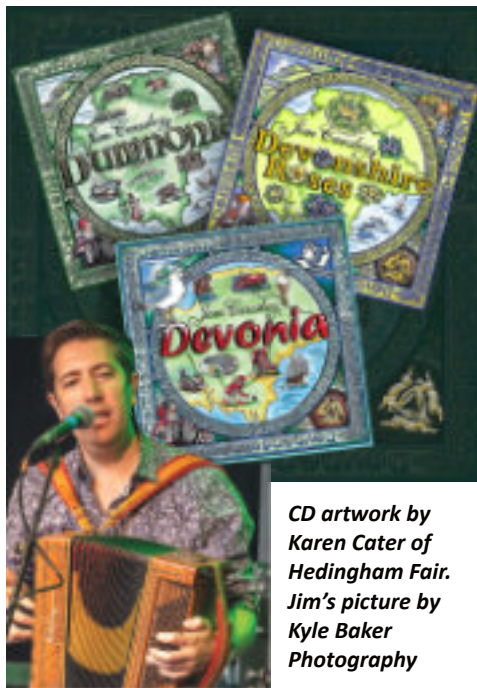
Jim's three CDs comprise 84 songs and four poems, all of which have been included on merit. They are both lovely to listen to and capable of being learnt and performed by others in the years to come.

Some of the songs do need singing in the Devonshire dialect and it is far easier to learn how to do that by listening to Jim than by trying to work it out for yourself from the sheet music.

The Covid restrictions have very much reduced the opportunities for professional folk performers to appear on stage or even to share a room with others to play music and sing. Jim deserves tremendous credit for making the best use of his unwanted spare time to research, learn and perform (with the help of Zoom), this fine collection of traditional and music hall style Devonshire songs.

JIM has designed and produced all three of these CDs with the help of Karen Cater of Hedingham Fair's fantastically attractive and thoughtful cover artwork and the excellent work of his graphic designer John Griffiths of LUA Design.

Will this trilogy be the complete collection of this kind of Devonshire song? Perhaps not, only last week, I gave Jim a copy of *The Dinky Farm Nigh Burrator* by C John Trythall, the writer of *Tavistock Goozey Fair*, along with a broadsheet



CD artwork by Karen Cater of Hedingham Fair. Jim's picture by Kyle Baker Photography

of *A New Song on the Wrestling Match Between Cann and Polkinghorne*, well it was new in 1826 when the fight took place in Devonport.

And there is always the possibility of newly written songs gaining the popularity of the others that Jim has recorded. I was delighted to see that Jim has included in *Devonia* a song called *Chagford Show*, written for the great event by my good friends Tich Scott and Carl Allerfeldt. By tradition, a new verse is added every year and people await the first airing with a certain amount of anxiety and the phone number of their solicitor, in case they get a mention in any of the newly penned lines.

Two other new songs are included among the 40 tracks on the *Devonia* double CD: Bob Cann's brilliantly structured song, *Craftsmen Of The Moor*, written in the mid-Seventies in celebration of the Dartmoor crafts and way of

life he saw disappearing is wholeheartedly justified and Jim's own song Saint Boniface Day, written to celebrate Saint Boniface being recognised by Devon County Council as the official Patron Saint of Devon in 2019. Undoubtedly this was terrible news for the newly formed Saint Pet Rock Band.

Many of you have been to a Jim Causley concert or to a folk gathering with him as the main guest. He has been able to turn tiresome, sometimes even irksome, songs into treasured items with his wit and humour. *Devon Glorious Devon* (on Devon Roses) comes immediately to mind. It's a relic of the past with no place in a folk singer's repertoire. Well, Jim certainly changed that narrow way of thinking and he has managed to do the same on Devonian with Henry Newbold's poem, *Drake's Drum*. This has been set to music several times but Jim has chosen the setting by Heather Wood of the influential acapella harmony trio The Young Tradition. Heather lived in Sticklepath in the Sixties. The instrumental introduction and accompaniment are spine chilling and yet Jim's committed vocals provide a deep and warm response.

NOT surprisingly, the Sabine Baring-Gould collection is the source of several songs: 14 are attributed to the great man and this reinforces the importance of the work that he undertook. Jim puts his mark on all of these songs adding subtle variations to and putting more life into some of the more familiar tunes and arrangements. Understandably, Jim who is from the village of Whimble, is attracted by songs that have an East Devon connection and both *Rosemary Lane* and *The Wife of Dunkswell* are examples.

Another fruitful source for the songs is the Transactions of the Devonshire Association. One of the sections is the researches and reports on the folklore and the dialect of the county. Several good folk songs have been printed since 1860 and Jim has searched out *Hunting The Hare* and a political broadsheet from the 1891 *Ye Men of Devon*. Mariners Away Shanty Crew provide hearty support in the choruses and on other songs as well and all via a zoom connection.

In addition to working with Trev Munkenbeck and Mariners Away, Jim has done an excellent job in mixing and marrying together the recordings of the supporting musicians: Matt Norman on mandolin and banjo, Nick Wyke on violin, viola and guitar and Jo Freya on vocals, soprano sax, whistle, and clarinet.

The ballad *Margaret of Oxenham* is another song from the Transactions of the Devonshire

Association, all 42 verses. It's a wonderfully rich composition about the apparition of The White Bird of Oxenham before the murder of Lady Margaret by a madman at the parish church in South Tawton.

Other popular sheet music songs on this CD include *Bread And Cheese And Cider* which George Edworthy of Willand used to sing at the Jolly Porter in Exeter, *Chap From The Country* which I learnt from Frank Webber of South Zeal, and two songs written by William Weeks, a lecturer at St Luke's College in Exeter: *Mortal Unlucky Old Chap* and *That Quare Vaylin*. *Down 'Ome in Kirton Town* is a delightful song that was still being sung in Crediton until recently. *The Wonnerful Wise Man o' Tawton* by Charles Byron Minter dates from 1913. I can say without a shadow of doubt that it has not previously been recorded on a CD.

With 40 tracks on this double album, it is impossible for me to comment on all, but it is important in this review to mention the four poems by Joseph Valprey, an American who was taken prisoner during our second war with America in 1812. He wrote the poems while being held in Dartmoor Prison. Tom Greeves alerted Jim to the writings of Valprey who was released at the end of April 1815 but died at sea on his voyage home on March 24, 1816.

Devonia stands well on its own but copies of the two other parts of the trilogy Dunmonia and Devonshire Roses are still available so why not buy the full set?

- The CDs can be ordered from www.jimcausley.co.uk
Devonia is £16, Dumnonia, £10, and Devonshire Roses £12. The full set is only £30.

MUGDOCK

Scottish Ceilidh

&

Country Dance Band

01643 707294

Tears for a clown

Folk world pays tribute to Great Western Morris's fabulous Fool, Mike Boston



GOING OUT IN STYLE: Mike Boston's coffin, adorned with his trademark diamond pañern, is carried by his daughters Miryam and Nina wearing two of his Master of Ceremonies jackets

“A BEAUTIFUL man, who was larger than life despite being diminutive in size,” is how Jo Freya of Blowzabella described Mike Boston. So many people across the South-west and beyond would agree with that description of Great Western Morris's irrepresible Fool, who was also a ceilidh organiser, theatrical performer and so much more.

Hundreds of them came to the Exeter and Devon Crematorium on Monday February 7 to bid farewell to Mike, who “could charm a New York cop as easily as a gang of little kids”, according to Dave Hubbard of Great Western Morris. “He dazzled and distracted crowds across the continents while we got on with the boring job of Morris dancing.”

All aspects of Mike's life were represented at the funeral. Past and present members of Great Western Morris lined the approach to the Chapel. The coffin, covered in Mike's signature blue and white diamonds, was carried into the service by his daughters, Miryam and Nena, wearing Mike's “master of ceremonies” red tail coats and his shoes. John Jones of the Oyster Band led the singing of *Bright Morning Star*, setting the scene for a very



moving celebration of Mike's life. Numbers inevitably overflowed out of the chapel and the event was watched by many on the webcast.

After the service, all were invited to the Exeter Corn Exchange and were joined by many more to remember Mike, celebrate his life and the way he brought people together to perform and simply enjoy themselves. There was dancing to Mrs Midnight's, the band that Mike often called for at ceilidhs, Jo Freya and friends, music, songs and good words from his many friends.

Mike made a big contribution to the folk world in the South-west, adding colour to the life of all that knew him. He was born and brought up in Exeter with his four brothers and two sisters.

In the late Sixties, work took him to Swindon, where he met his first wife Di, but he kept returning to Exeter to visit the Jolly Porter Folk Club. Together they attended college at Leicester where they got involved with the folk club and Mike's talent for acting as host and master of ceremonies started to develop.

They moved to London to gain teaching qualifications, again getting engaged in the folk scene, and eventually worked in Norwich. The folk revival was in full swing and Mike, looking

In Memoriam

for a performance outlet, joined the Morris side Kemp's Men.

He took a teaching job at Priory High School in Exeter early in 1975 and immediately joined Great Western Morris, which had grown out of the Jolly Porter club and St Luke's Teacher Training College in 1969. Being "experienced", Mike started to dance out as soon as he got his kit together and first appeared in the log books on the Whit Tour in 1975, when Great Western danced alongside Cardiff Morris, Cardiff Ladies and Appley Morris. Mike was a real mover and shaker and persuaded the side it would be more fun, and more profitable, to dance out regularly during the summer and restrict "practising" to winter months.

IN THE late Seventies, Mike and Di separated and he found a new partner and kindred spirit in dance, in Eddie Sinclair, a member of Glory of the West Morris. They eventually settled in Crediton. He was elected squire of GWM in the autumn of 1976, steering the side to festival and overseas bookings after which he was bagman for five years. Mike loved the limelight and during this time he slid into the role of Great Western's fool.

As Fool, Mike started wearing tatters in the summer of 79 (GW danced border at Christmas in those days) and doing what he did best: being a bridge between the audience and the performance. But tatters are very hot in the summer and he and Eddie (who had real flare for colour and style) came up with the Great Western blue diamonds in the summer of 81. It was all hand painted and each iteration was slightly different; he added and changed as the fancy took him. He had that gift of being approachable to all. Children, the old and the vulnerable always got his attention and he would find a way for them to be included in the performance. There was never "them and us" with Mike: the morris, the audience we were all in it together.

The Eighties and Nineties were an exciting



STILL CRAZY AFTER ALL THESE YEARS: Mike Boston on the phone box in Sidmouth in 1988 and 2010

as GWM ceildh master, masterminding regular winter social dances in Exeter supporting both local and nationally known bands for more than 30 years. He was always on the lookout for upcoming ceildh bands and always managed to persuade them to travel down to Devon, making it worth their while by arranging further performance spots and accommodation, often in his own home. He became a licence holder to facilitate such events, running bars at every dance, at Crediton Arts Centre, Topsham Folk Club, and eventually the Blackmore Gardens Bar during Sidmouth Folk Week.

Mike made a major contribution to keeping dance at the centre of Sidmouth Folk Week. Former Sidmouth organiser Steve Heap said: "His help and support while I was on my 20 year stint looking after Sidders was much appreciated and will be remembered. His words were quite right, 'You might be the man in charge but it's the festival that matters'. I carried that truth."

Mike just loved to perform in front of a live audience: morris, rapper, mummings plays coupled with appearances with Crediton Arts, Brown Paper Bag Theatre Co and Topsham Players. He was constantly on the go. Mike and Eddie's two daughters Miryam and Nena were born at the end of the Eighties and he, a proud and devoted father, just swept them up in to his world and they loved it.

In his later years, Mike inevitably turned to calling for social dances with local band Mrs Midnight's. He loved getting people up to dance. It was a shock to him when his wife took ill late

time for folk as festivals were developing right across England with opportunities for a morris side to perform from Whitby to Wadebridge and Mike got Great Western invited to them all. By this time, he was lecturing in computer science and technology at Marjon University Plymouth which gave him yet a longer reach into the folk life of Devon.

Mike had a deep involvement with dance in general. He had the lifelong role

in 2019 with an inoperable brain tumour and her death in early 2020 and the subsequent covid lockdown took a severe toll on his health. At the end of 2021 he was in hospital for tests a trifle incapacitated but still full of plans for the future (especially Great Western's 50th celebration this June) and his sudden death from a pulmonary embolism was totally unexpected.

His legend lives on. Former GW squire Quinton Cumbes remembers him as "a real life Tigger, bouncing around relentlessly generating ideas, causing chaos and keeping us and everyone else on their toes. The Pied Piper, never happier than working with the children that were drawn to him, probably 'cos he was their size. But Mike was also a consummate professional and a good organiser. "Any hint of an away trip such as GW's visit to Italy, he was instantly checking flights, working out best deals, communicating with organisers and then could present us with all sensible options of

flights, accommodation etc. After the Steve Heap era of Sidmouth ended and a collection of people tried to organise the next festival, Mike ended up being contacted when it was apparent the ceilidhs hadn't been organised. Then GW were organising regular top level ceilidhs and knew the bands and had their contact details. John Dowell firmly believes that without Mike's input and then bringing us into the fray helping with ceilidhs and bar, the Sidmouth Festival would have died out."

Current Sidmouth director John Braithwaite is now considering what the festival will do to commemorate Mike. He added: "Mike set the standard for the Morris fool character in all the right ways. His impact from the stage was significant as he spent a relatively limited amount of time on it with GW and more in among the audience."

Mike Boston

August 5, 1948 - December 9, 2021

Goodbye, dancing Dave

READING about the wonderful send-off for Mike Boston reminded me about the first morris funeral I attended, *writes John Foxen*. It was that of my dear old friend Dave Hewitt, former squire of Lodestone Morris and a dancer with Harberton, and Dartmoor. I wasn't a morris man then and for me, it was a truly life-changing event. Without it I would not be editing this magazine, living in Devon and a part of the wonderful world of morris.

Many readers may remember Dave, who passed away in 2005. Some of you may have been at his funeral at Exeter crematorium. Many morris sides attended and Dave and his lovely wife Mavis had left the instruction that no one was to wear mourning, not even the pallbearers; all morris dancers in kit and all musicians to bring an instrument. Dave had specified: "After the funeral, I want you to have the sort of party to make me say, 'Bugger, I'm sorry I missed that'."

Many of you may have seen Dave dance. Sadly, I saw him out with the morris only on old videotapes and it made my jaw drop. I'd known Dave since I was 13 and as a teenager he was the clumsiest beggar ever. If you'd put him in big boots back then and told him to leap about waving a big stick, there wouldn't have been a dancer left standing. Unless Dave had managed to knock himself out in the first five seconds. Yet



Dave Hewitt

Picture: Heather Newland

there was this graceful figure on the screen gliding through intricate moves and one point dancing while carrying his young nephew.

In the old days, Dave's passions were motorcycles, cars, mountains and sailing and he was the last person I'd have thought would become a morris dancer. (That was my ignorance. I now know the more unlikely it is someone will become a morris dancer, the more likely it is that's what they will become.)

But I knew none of this transformation because Dave swapped Essex where we'd grown

In Memoriam

up for South Brent while my work took me round the country so we didn't see each other for a few years. One day I realised those few years had become about 16 and got round to ringing him. He seemed very subdued and I wondered if I'd offended him by losing touch.

"Is anything wrong?" I asked.

"Well, since you ask, John, I'm dying."

That was a bit of a conversation stopper, even by Dave's standards.

After leaving school, Dave had trained as a carpenter on building sites. This was back in the Sixties and early Seventies. Even then the dangers of asbestos were well known but it was useful and profitable for the bosses so it was still used. "People talked about the dangers," said Dave, "but I always used to say it never did me any harm. Well it has now."

It was hard to believe. Dave was always in scrapes but somehow survived. Like the time when working on top of a building he stepped into a lift shaft. The plank he was carrying saved his life by bridging the gap, leaving him dangling from it like a cartoon character. That was Dave, indestructible just like Tom and Jerry.

But Asbestosis has no sense of humour or fairness. When I and Terry, his other close mate from the old days, drove down from London to see him, the disease had knocked the stuffing out of him. "Life's not much fun," he said. "I can't do all the things I used to do."

But he was also changed in other, better ways. As well as Morris, he'd embraced other aspects of the folk world. He'd learned to play the

bowed psaltery after making himself one, working out the design from the photograph on a Yetties LP cover. And he'd started writing songs and poetry. I saw him only once more before the end and I grieve that I did not know him in the years he blossomed in the folk scene. He was just 56 when he died on June 16, 2005.

HIS funeral was a revelation for me, packed with dancers in colourful kit: Lodestone, Dartmoor, Dartington, Newton Bushell and Sidmouth Steppers all sent representatives. And the celebration of his life after the funeral was a joyous tribute, full of song, laughter and dancing.

It really did change my life because, in Dave's memory, I started playing for morris sides: first Lodestone then I found myself getting hijacked by other border sides – Wreckers, Widders, Enigma, Steampunk and now Dartmoor. Yes, I'm now a total morris tart. When I retired, the West Country was the only place to settle,

Before Dave died, I tried to contact as many of the old gang as possible so they could say goodbye to him. This led to me meeting again the woman I hadn't the nerve to ask out in 1969. She is now my wife.

So thank you, Dave, for all the friendship we had in life and for what you have done for me from beyond the grave. Here's a toast to you, Mike Boston and all past morris men and women. They may be gone but the dance goes on.

HAS morris or folk music changed your life? If it has, please share your story with us.

Brenda Tombs

A FOUNDING member of Cogs and Wheels, Brenda Tombs, passed away on Thursday March 10 at the age of 87.

Brenda was an incredibly vivacious woman whose love for life helped build the side which is based in South Zeal and started in 1996..

Ill health forced her to leave Cogs and Wheels in 2008 and she missed dancing so much that she couldn't bear to watch her old side perform. But when her youngest daughter, Donna, joined in 2017, she became the most loyal and enthusiastic member of the side's audience.

Brenda moved to Devon about 30 years ago and made so many friends. She will sadly missed by them and her family.

A celebration of her life was held welcome at the celebration of her life on Wednesday 30th March 30 at the Beer Cross Natural Burial



Brenda, front centre, at Cogs and Wheels 21st anniversary celebra ons

Ground and those who attended were told to wear their brightest and most colourful clothes and bring the best stories of her life.



New website will keep us up to date

COLIN ANDREWS introduces an innovative online Folk Directory and our new membership rules

THE key aim of Devon Folk has always been to promote and support all kinds of folk activity within the county.

Up until now, this quarterly magazine What's Afoot – now in its 42nd year of publication – has contained contact details for song and dance clubs, morris sides, bands and callers, and other organisations. Its distribution tends to be largely to those people already involved in folk music.

In 2018, in an attempt to spread the net wider, Devon Folk produced a publicity leaflet which was made available in public libraries, tourist information centres and other places of public access. Many clubs were prepared to pay a small

fee for inclusion in the leaflet. The exercise was repeated in 2019 and 2020, although with the imposition of lockdown most of the latter edition ended up in recycling.

Any information in printed form, however, is only current up to a date prior to publication, whereas online, it can be updated easily. Such information is available through the Devon Folk website (www.devonfolk.org) in association with the folk website www.flaxey-green.co.uk. These sites may not be widely known among the general public.

Rather than go for a published directory, as outlined in the last issue of What's Afoot, we are



MAY HEYDAYS

29 April - AT EVESHAM 2 MAY 2022

Callers and bands booked include: Joanna Reiner, Albireo, Confluence, Keeping Thyme, Klerizma, Portland Duo, Purcell's Polyphonic Party and Wild Ride

English, International, American, Contra & French dancing

At: de Montfort School, WR11 1DQ

All on one site, with camping & café. Weekend £97 + steward rates. Go to www.mayheydays.org.uk

The Folkdance Festival in the Vale



DEVON FOLK MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Please complete and return to the Devon Folk
 Membership Secretary
 Anne Gill, Maleth, 11, Cleveland Road,
 Torquay, TQ25BD

I wish to join Devon Folk as an
 Individual member

We wish to join Devon Folk as a
 family group

We wish to join Devon Folk as a
 Group or club

Name of individual, club or group

Contact person (for group or club)

Address

Postcode

Telephone

Email

Cheque enclosed
 To Devon Folk

Details requested
 For BACS payment

Magazine to be sent by POST

EMAIL

I/We agree to Devon Folk contacting me/us as
 indicated above and for occasional notifications.
 Your email will not be passed to any third party.

developing a new website, www.devonfolkdirectory.org. This will be publicised in libraries, schools and youth groups, Women's Institutes, the U3A and other such organisations and on social media.

The site will allow anyone to find speakers, performers, workshop leaders, folk song and dance clubs, display groups, tutors, and much more in several different categories of folk activity in the county.

Registration for listing on the site will be offered as a benefit of membership of Devon Folk but will also be available for non-members to register. Contributors will be able to update their entry at any time. Registration and payment will be available on-line.

Devon Folk membership is being simplified, with a basic charge of £10 a year for individual member, family at same address, groups and clubs. EFDSS members living in Devon will no longer receive free membership. The benefits of membership include:

ONE copy of the What's Afoot magazine, published quarterly

FREE listing in one category of the Devon Folk Directory. The categories are: Song, Dance, Music, Folklore, Organisations, Other.

NON-members will be charged at £15 to register in one category

ADDITIONAL listing in other categories will be charged at £2 per category

In due course, the Devon Folk Directory will replace the listings currently displayed on the Flaxey-Green website. The Devon Folk Directory will be administered by the Devon Folk Chairman, Devon Folk Publicity Officer, What's Afoot Editor, and Flaxey-Green Webmaster.

As What's Afoot went to press, the new website was still under construction but was expected to be fully active by the end of March. Enquiries should be sent to the Devon Folk Publicity Officer..

You can still subscribe to What's Afoot without joining Devon Folk. This costs £6 a year for four editions. Contact Steve Gill Maleth, 11, Cleveland Rd, Torquay, TQ2 5BD. Tel: 01803 290427. Email anne.m.gill@icloud.com



ELECTED MEMBERS OF THE DEVON FOLK COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT

Jim Causley

VICE PRESIDENTS

Jo Trapnell

Aileen Wills

CHAIR and

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Anne Gill

Maleth, 11 Cleveland Road,

Torquay, TQ2 5BD.

01803 290427

VICE CHAIR/PUBLICITY

Colin Andrews

Bonny Green, Morchard

Bishop, Crediton EX17 6PG

01363 877216

bonnygreencolin@gmail.com

SECRETARY and TREASURER

Eileen Conway

151 Kingsdown Crescent,

Dawlish EX7 0HB.

01626 862312

WEBMASTER

Trevor Paul

webmaster@devonfolk.org.uk

MINUTES SECRETARY

Jean Foster

1 Lowicke House, Ringslade

Road, Newton Abbot, TQ12

1QF

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Steve Gill

Maleth, 11 Cleveland Road,

Torquay, TQ2 5BD

01803 290427

Mary Marker

Cromarje,

Oldway, Chudleigh,

TQ13 0JA

01626 854141

annmarker5@btinternet.com

Eileen McKee

Woodland Coøage,

South Brent,

TQ10 9ES.

01364 73699

eileen.southbrenRolk@

gmail.com

Jane Snow

27 John Street,

Tiverton EX16 5JP

01884 259042

WHAT'S AFOOT EDITOR

John Foxen

devonfolkeditor@gmail.com

129 Tamar Avenue, Tavistock,

PL19 9HZ

Devon Folk needs you!

HERE is an opportunity for you to help revitalise Devon's folk scene after the covid crisis and to spread the joy of the music, song and dance that we love.

There are vacancies on the Devon Folk committee and people with a strong interest in folk, energy and enthusiasm and ideas are asked to sign up. We particularly need young people to take an interest.

A nomination form is printed here and applications are welcome from those in every area of folk and from all parts of Devon.

Full committee meetings are usually held at Ide near Exeter four times a year on a Saturday morning in addition to the business meeting after the annual general meeting, which is usually held in March.

DEVON FOLK COMMITTEE NOMINATION FORM

Nominee

Proposed by

Seconded by

I, the undersigned, am willing to stand for election to the Devon Folk Committee.

Name

.....

Address

.

Telephone.....

Email

Please return this form to:

Anne Gill, Maleth, 11 Cleveland Road, Torquay, TQ2 5BD

folk music & song at topsham folk club

www.topshamfolkclub.org

**Matthews Hall • Fore Street
Topsham EX3 0HF**

Buy concert tickets online at
www.topshamfolkclub.org
or Matthews Hall Café - open Tuesday
to Friday 10am to 3pm & Saturday
mornings 8am to 1pm
www.facebook.com/topshamfolkclub
all enquiries 01392 874718

++ SINGERS' NIGHTS ++ Our singers' nights
are running most Tuesdays - upstairs in
Matthews Hall council chamber from 7.45pm
to 10.15pm. Please bring your own drink and
£1 contribution. Tunes session 7.30pm. Singers
from 7.45pm. Arrive by 7.45pm to book a slot if
you'd like to perform. Non-performers are
always most welcome. On the following
Tuesdays we're online at Topsham Folkvid:
22 March, 26 April, 24 May & 28 June

Details may change - keep an eye on
our website or Facebook page

Our monthly (mainly English) instrumental
session is also currently meeting upstairs at
Matthews Hall on the first Monday: 4 April,
2 May, 6 June & 4 July from 8pm - 10pm

Charity Quiz Night - Sunday 20 March - 7.45pm • free entry • live music • CD sale • folk quiz

Edgelarks

Sunday 3 April 2022
8pm - £17

Gigspanner Big Band

Sunday 22 May 2022
8pm - £20

Spiers & Boden

Sunday 26 June 2022
8pm - £20



www.edgelarks.co.uk



www.gigspanner.com



www.spiersandboden.com

Celebrating Sue and Sheila - A special evening of music and song
to remember our much missed friends Sue Mentz and Sheila Stephens
Sunday 24 April - Clyst St Mary village hall • Clyst St Mary • Exeter EX5 1AA
5.30pm for 6pm start - finish time 8pm • Performance spots by prior invitation only
Please confirm your attendance at www.wegotickets.com/sct/bDutUxmBJR