

What's Afoot

The official magazine of

Devon Folk
DANCE SONG MUSIC MOTTS

No 117 Summer-Autumn



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EDITORIAL

ACCIDENTS will happen, even in What's Afoot, which is why the editor is in the stocks. Firstly, a technical glitch in the cover photograph last month made it appear that Nigel Sture had an extra thumb. We would like to apologise and confirm that Nigel's dexterity on the squeeze box is down to years of hard practice not a genetic mutation. (This issue's quiz: which six-fingered musician cut off an extra digit while drunk in a bar? Answers by email to the editor.)

Another grave error by the editor appeared in the review section when Bob Fox's new album, *A Garland For Joey*, was attributed to John Tams. No, John wrote the songs for the show *War Horse*. Bob recorded them. Apologies to Mr Fox and to reviewer Tom Brown. (Incidentally, Bob Fox is due to appear in the touring version of *War Horse* at Plymouth Theatre Royal from August 29 to September 15.)

We will work hard to keep this issue error-free and if you spot anything, do let us know. But be gentle. As the Western saloon sign said: "Please don't shoot the pianist, he is doing his best."

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Cover photograph: The Hunting of the Earl of Rone.

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The return of runaway Rone

Every May bank holiday weekend the streets of Combe Martin are packed for the colourful Hunting of the Earl of Rone. It's hard to imagine the village without this unique custom but it was lost for 140 years. On the 40th anniversary of its revival, BARBARA BROWN tells how a group of folk enthusiasts recaptured the magic

THE Hunting of the Earl of Rone had not been a part of village life since 1837, when it was banned by local bylaw due to "licentious and drunken behaviour" but in 1978 it was restored to what some believed was its rightful place, and this year it celebrated that 40 years in style.

It all started in 1970 when a group of young enthusiasts from the North Devon Folk Club were asked by an older member: "What do you know about The Hunting of the Earl of Rone?"

"Nothing," they replied. The rejoinder was: "Then I suggest that you go and find out."

They duly did, searching in the North Devon Atheneum and finding various reports, most of which came from The North Devon Scenery Book by the Rev G Tugwell. It was published in 1863, so the event was well within the living memory of his informants.

For a fortnight before Ascension Day, villagers dressed as Grenadiers, with a Hobby Horse and Fool, went out hunting for this



character called the Earl of Rone. On Ascension Day they went to Lady's Wood at the top of the village and captured him, placed him back to front on a donkey and paraded him down through the village, stopping every so often to "shoot" him off the donkey. He was then revived by the Horse and Fool and placed back on the donkey.

Residents of Combe Martin and surrounding parishes (Berrynarbor, Kentisbury and Trentishoe), dressed in their Sunday best, accompanied them to Seaside where the party broke up.

The legend behind the custom went back to 1607 and the "flight of the earls" from Ireland, when the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell escaped from being arrested for treason against the English Crown. It was said Tyrone was shipwrecked at Rapparee Cove just outside Combe Martin, and, sustained on ship's biscuits, hid out in Lady's Wood, where he was

Hunting the Earl



Pictures provided by Barbara Brown

YOUNG HUNTING: *Children are encouraged to take part so the custom will not be lost again*

captured by a party of Grenadiers sent out from Barnstaple, taken to Exeter and executed.

In fact, he landed on the coast of France, and travelled overland to Spain where he received pensions from the Pope and the King of Spain. So much for the legend...

The folk enthusiasts thought it would be a good idea to reconstruct what it might have looked like at around the time it was banned. There was some description in the text of the Horse, Fool, Grenadiers, Earl, and donkey's decoration, but, inevitably some of it was informed guesswork and some, frankly, made up! Comparing it to Padstow and Minehead Hobby Horse customs, it was thought there must have been music, so that was added.

That summer The North Devon Folk Troupe took it to carnivals in Ilfracombe and Barnstaple, winning first prize for "walking" entrants in both, which had not really been the intention!

In 1974, Combe Martin restarted its own carnival (there aren't many villages, even large ones, that have a week-long carnival each year, are there?), heard about "their" custom, and

asked if it could take part in the carnival procession. "Yes," the troupe replied, "but we're not competing!"

So for the next four years, they followed the procession down from Headtown to Seaside, a distance of nearly a mile and a half. By then, one fixed tune was used, and a simple dance step was developing among those not playing instruments. The number of suitable musicians in the area was quite small, and the North Devon ones were swelled considerably by musicians from elsewhere in the country coming faithfully every year to help out.

In 1977 the group was asked to take the reconstruction to the National Folk Festival, then at Loughborough University – it was interesting to have to arrange the use of a donkey at such a distance! Among the number was a complete mummung side and a complete morris side, so the National did well out of them.

By then, quite a number of villagers were saying: "This is too good not to take part in, but we can't as we're involved in the Carnival."

This was just the moment to suggest that the custom should take its own place in the village's

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Hunting the Earl

calendar. The Earl of Rone Council was formed from some of those interested, plus some who had reconstructed it, to run what was decided should be a weekend (rather than the original fortnight) and from 1978 it took place on the weekend of the Late Spring Bank Holiday.

One of those involved was a teacher at the village primary school, who began teaching the top class about it so they could take their own procession out during the weekend.

The structure of the weekend ended up as follows: on Friday evening the Hunting was accompanied by drummers; on Saturday, the “Junior Party” went out with their own Hobby Horse, with Fool and Grenadiers from Year 6 of the primary school, and musicians (in those days very much assisted by adult musicians); on Sunday afternoon the “Senior Party”, including musicians and drummers, hunted throughout the village, including side roads; on Monday evening, the Earl was captured and paraded down the village to Seaside and thrown in the sea. Except for the Saturday, tradition was maintained by calling into some of the (then) nine pubs en route.

The Junior Party consists of all children under the age of 18. All those who take part on the Saturday receive a badge with the year on it – they have really become badges of honour.

Those who take part for at least two of the three years between primary school and the age of 14, receive their Senior Party badge, and can play instruments in the Senior Party or take a much fuller part in the processions.

It was recognised early on that if the children weren't involved, particularly when under peer pressure once they went to the senior school outside the village, the custom would be in danger of dying out again. That hasn't happened, and organisation by and large has been taken over by the next generation, many of whom can't remember a time when it was not part of village life.

Many things have changed over the years, be they because of changes in the law or rules (perhaps the weight allowed to be carried by a

donkey); social change; pragmatic reasons (what do you do when the home pub of the Party closes, thus forcing you to change the routes used?); aesthetic reasons, resulting perhaps in changes to costumes; or something seemed like a good idea at the time, and if it worked and people approved, why not? This shows that the custom is a living tradition, not a museum piece.

Some significant things have been added over the years. For many years now, the “Stable” has been decorated with bunches of



ribbons, echoing the ribbons on the Hobby Horse, the Fool's hat and leggings and the Grenadiers' caps. Many people wear ribbons – some choosing 'family' colours – at the waist, on bags, in their hair, and on pushchairs or wheelchairs. Increasingly, villagers are decorating the front of their houses with ribbons and greenery.

The weekend included a ceilidh in the village hall on the Saturday evening from 1978 onwards. For various reasons it ceased some years ago, being replaced by a social evening

Hunting the Earl

in the home pub. But it was revived this year, very successfully, as a celebration of the 40th anniversary and there is much demand for it to continue.

Saturday is the night of the Combe Martin Strawberry Cake. The village was famous once for producing the first strawberries of the season anywhere in the UK, and this is commemorated by the Strawberry Cake – an amazing confection of sponge, whipped cream and fresh strawberries (taking three people about three hours just to assemble). It is paraded in to the Earl of Rone tune while the company joins in with the dance, and then avidly consumed.

The Monday night procession is several hundred strong and it's very difficult to see from one end of it to the other, especially as the whole village slopes slightly downhill. It was discovered that the oldest participant in the procession used as a child to go a-Maying,

and knew how to make a May garland. This is now carried by someone alongside the Hobby Horse and used as a signal between the rear, the mid-point and the front of the procession to indicate when it should stop for a "death".

Also on Monday, ropes decorated with ribbons and flowers are carried by the women at the front of the procession to stop children getting in front of them, and to make a pathway for the Grenadiers to carry the Earl into the sea at the end. Fresh flowers are used to decorate instruments and drums, worn as hair garlands by the women, or as corsages. This all adds to the feeling of celebration.

For many years, there have been enough villagers happy to play a drum, but musicians were another matter entirely. Unless someone has a burning desire to play an accordion throughout the year, it's very difficult to get them to play even that one tune, and it was reckoned as far back as '78 that it would

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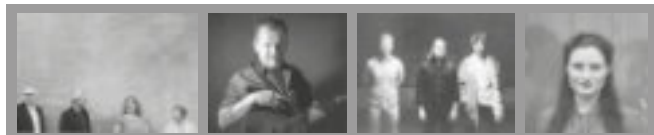
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Narthen

Sunday 9 September 2018 at 8pm £12 adv/£14 door

Narthen are Barry Coope, Lester Simpson, Jo Freya and Fi Fraser. Previously known under their own names for Christmas shows they decided to become an all year group featuring songs that will touch your heart, engage your intellect and wow your ears. Known for four part harmony all are also instrumentalists augmenting their repertoire with accompaniment. They play piano, accordion, fiddle, soprano sax, ukulele and whistles.

Martin Simpson

Sunday 14 October 2018 at 8pm £15 adv/£17 door

There is no doubt that after 45 years as a professional musician Martin is, right now, better than ever. Widely acknowledged as one of the finest acoustic and slide guitar players in the world, his interpretations of traditional songs are masterpieces of storytelling. Whether playing American old-time music, blues, a Dylan song or his own material, Martin Simpson is unpredictable, individual and a guitarist of immense subtlety.

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Sunday 4 November 2018 at 8pm £10 adv/£12 door

Tom Moore (fiddle, viola), Archie Churchill-Moss (melodeon) and Jack Rutter (guitar) are the trio that won the 2011 BBC Radio 2 Young Folk Award. Widely regarded as three of the best players, innovators and performers in traditional folk amongst a precociously gifted generation, their finely-crafted arrangements wield a rare potency. They reconvene to release their third record together which will mark a decade of performing as a band.

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Please note that we close for August

Our last singers' night before our summer break is Sunday 29 July. We start again on Sunday 2 September.



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Hunting the Earl

THE HUNTING OF THE EARL OF RONE



Tom Brown, one of the originators of the reconstruction, has written six editions of a booklet on The Hunting of the Earl of Rone. The most recent and most detailed was published by S&A Projects last November. He has written papers on the custom, and it was included in his PhD thesis. The new book can be obtained from the Earl of Rone Council, c/o 4 Trafalgar Arcade, Castle Street, Combe Martin EX34 0JD for £5 + £2 P&P. Cheques are payable to 'Earl of Rone Council'.



probably take 40 years before musicians from outside the village were no longer needed to carry the tune.

By dint of a lot of hard work, money spent on workshops and instruments, and lots of encouragement, particularly of children and young people, it took less than that. But does one then reject all those who have helped out over the years, bringing their families, and their families, with them? Of course not!

This was realised back in those early years, and it has been formally recognised that those people are a part of the custom, and will always

be so for as long as they wish. Thus close friendships have been built up among villagers and those from away who take part.

Other than residents of Combe Martin and the surroundings parishes, no one can become a member of the Senior Party without specific invitation from the Earl of Rone Council (which sometimes happens if someone makes a significant continuing contribution to its success). Over the years, this has become an important aspect of the village taking ownership of this unique tradition of which it is rightly proud.

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How to make the most of your talent

Folk is the music of the people and anyone can turn up at a session to sing or play. But to take it further, a lot of hard work and help is needed. ALEX ATHERTON tells how Wren helped her find her voice, then COLIN ANDREWS explains what's on offer from Devon Folk

ALEX: HAVING joined a Border Morris side in 2016, I soon found myself immersed in the folk scene around Dartmoor. I enjoyed the sessions after dance-outs, particularly the singing.

Although I had never sung a note before, naively I decided to have a go. So, I learnt a folk song – took me a while to get it right, but soon I was ready to perform it with the sole intention of having a bit of fun doing it. To my surprise, people enjoyed it and before I knew it I was singing it all the time, even at gigs with a band that I had joined.

We have many great singers in our side and one suggested that I enrol on the Baring-Gould Folk Song School, a week-long course organised by Wren Music, in which you are schooled in all aspects of singing by a team of experienced tutors.

With this recommendation and the need for guidance to improve my singing and overcome performance anxiety, I promptly booked my place for October 2017.

First day... my initial excitement soon turned to fear. What if I can't sing what they want me to sing? What if everyone else on the course is a fantastic singer? What if they ask me to do

stuff I just don't understand? With all these thoughts in my head, I entered the doors of the Ebenezer Hall in Okehampton with trepidation. But I soon relaxed after being welcomed by the tutors and other students – about a dozen of us, made up of people like me and a few returning pupils.

It soon became clear that the week was not only going to be useful, but also a lot of fun!

We were lucky to have five excellent tutors, each bringing a different skill and approach, including our guest tutor for the week, John Kirkpatrick – we were all very star-stuck! What a great character he is and what a fantastic wealth of knowledge to tap into.

We studied a number of subjects in group sessions, from warm-up techniques to song choices, from vocal coaching to music theory. We could also choose from a range of subjects for individual or group study; for example, accompaniment or harmony singing.

I particularly found the one-to-one tutor sessions invaluable. These gave me an opportunity to discuss areas of my performance that concerned me.

And we all found the daily “friendly circle” a

Learning Curve



IN HARMONY: The workshop class of 2017. Guest tutor John Kirkpatrick (back row, third from right) is standing just behind our writer Alex, keeping her on the straight and narrow

good chance to sing in front of others and to pass on positive comments.

The tutors were able to help me with many areas that concerned me about my singing and performance. For example, one of my major concerns, and a subject that I chatted to every tutor about, was nerves.

Nerves can completely control my performance and can really frustrate me, affecting my voice and occasionally stopping me from performing altogether.

In talking about this with the tutors and others on the course, it became clear that I am not unique and, to a greater or lesser extent, this is the case for most people. It was a positive experience to share how I feel with others and to learn various possible coping strategies.

Being at Song School means that you are with other like-minded people who experience the same things that you do and you help each

other through. A common issue for many participants, including me, was song choice. I had been worried that I should be picking more traditional folk songs than I do, but I knew they really didn't suit my voice.

So in one of my tutor sessions I discussed this, and afterwards came out with a whole load of new songs to look at. Basically the advice was to choose songs that you like and are comfortable singing – there is no fixed list to pick from.

The moment I saw I was to have a one-to-one with John Kirkpatrick, I went into a spin. "Oh no!", I thought. "I can't do this singing thing in front of a folk legend, someone who has played with many of the great folk singers!"

So with my pulse racing and stomach twitching, I waited in the small tutor room, warming up my voice, just hoping for someone to set the fire alarm off so the whole thing

Learning Curve

would be cancelled! No such luck – suddenly, John burst through the door! And without further ado, I was singing my first song. For once, my voice was on top form and the acoustics in the room were fab.

But as I came to the end, there was silence... my heart sank. Then he asked me to sing another, and then to repeat a couple of verses. Still no feedback. I just thought: “He hates my singing”, and thinking I had nothing to lose, I belted out another song at his request.

At this point, I was getting worried as I was running out of songs to sing. “Oh, please let this end soon”, my brain was thinking! But then, to my great surprise, some words came from John's mouth which nearly knocked me over ... “You have lovely voice”, he said.

“Wow”, I thought, “I'll take that!”. He just gave me a few pointers about my diction to make sure that I don't swallow the end of my words ... “if you have lovely words to say, then make sure people can hear them.”

All too soon, it was time for the next person to have their one-to-one, and I was on my way back to the main classroom... on cloud nine! There's nothing like singing in front of a folk legend to get the heart racing, but what a memory to take home.

We were also given the choice of picking some more specialist subjects during the week. One day I chose a class on how to set up a PA. Although mostly I sing without a microphone, now and then I have to use a PA when gigging with the band.

There wasn't time to go into great detail about the subject, but I was able to ask lots of questions and hopefully am now a little more prepared for when I face a microphone and PA system in future.

A typical day at Song School is full-on. Starting in the morning, you work right through to late afternoon. Then there is a short break – time to pop out to grab some dinner before the evening entertainment. One evening there was

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Learning Curve

a tutors' concert, the next there was a student folk night (another chance to sing). And Wren put on a lovely dinner on the final evening, again with music and more singing.

As if this wasn't enough, most nights we headed off to a local pub to enjoy a pint or two and, guess what, even more singing.

Having a couple of songs under your belt before you go is a good idea. It enables you to get started quickly. However, the tutors are great at helping you choose new songs, and Wren Music has a fantastic library where you can do your own song research.

Song School does not require you to be able to read music. All songs are learnt by ear using lyric sheets. Sometimes the dots are given out and it can help you to follow where the tune is going, but otherwise no knowledge of music reading is required.

In 2017, the Baring-Gould Festival took place in Okehampton on the weekend immediately after Song School. The festival organisers always aim to introduce a less well-known folk tradition from another country at the festival, and this year the Italian folk trio Vincanto were invited to perform.

We were very lucky that they also ran a couple of singing workshops on the last day of the Song School and taught us some wonderful Italian folk songs, in Italian and in three-part harmony which was great fun!

Song School does exactly what it says on the tin. I thoroughly enjoyed my week and gained a huge amount. I even started to put myself forward to sing! And not forgetting that I met some great people, both fellow students and tutors. I would highly recommend it.

THIS year's Song School in Okehampton runs from Monday 22nd - Friday 26th October and costs £300. The guest tutor is Chris Coe. For more details contact: Marilyn Tucker, Artistic Director, Wren Music, Ebenezer Hall, North Street, Okehampton, Devon EX20 1AR. Telephone: 01837 53754.

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Do you need a little band aid?

COLIN: Glance through the pages of past What's Afoot magazines and you will find some folk dance bands that have been in existence since the very first issues back in the early Eighties. But others vanish without trace within a couple of years.

So why do some stand the test of time while others fade like the snows of yesteryear?

The quality of the music which bands provide for folk dancing is also a vital factor. Word of mouth is a key factor: satisfied clients will book the band again and recommend it to others. But word of a disappointing performance – or worse – will spread even more quickly.

Even good bands may have an “off” evening. Perhaps the caller is under the weather, or a new caller fails to gel with the band, or perhaps the band doesn't deliver quite what the client was expecting.

For example, a band playing predominantly Playford won't go down a bomb at a ceilidh expecting lively English polkas. And frenetic Irish jigs may not suit a birthday party dance for senior citizens.

Talented musicians do not necessarily guarantee a band will be good for folk dancing. If their experience is in a different genre such as jazz, classical or contemporary song, some adjustment may be required to adapt to the stricter regular tempo, rhythms and structure of folk dance tunes.

Enthusiasm by itself is not enough. The

willingness to appreciate, learn and adapt to the folk dance idiom is essential.

The Band Aid page of the Devon Folk website (www.devonfolk.org.uk) now offers hints and guidelines for musicians thinking of starting a folk dance/ceilidh band - and also hints for budding callers. These notes have drawn on the experiences – sometimes unfortunate – of bands and callers that have been on the scene for some considerable time. They are not intended to be prescriptive. They may however raise important issues a new band or caller may not have even considered.

There are also several full-length tracks taken from the albums of several well-known Devon-based bands to illustrate the different kinds of rhythm and styles in playing for folk dancing.

Feedback would be welcome. Please send it to publicity@devonfolk.org.uk

Colin Andrews



Jeremy Child

Barn Dance Caller



www.barndancecaller.net

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

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Alex and Rhian Hamilton

01392 422119 jeremy.m.child@gmail.com

Contra Dance in Exeter

Second Friday in Every Month (except August): 7:30pm to 10:30pm

www.tinyurl.com/ContraExeter

01392 422 119 / 07969 297 633 contraexeter@gmail.com

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info@devontelecom.co.uk

WHEN I was thinking about a topic for this issue's column, I thought I ought to go back to basics and talk about the ceilidh scene in Devon. Then I realised there isn't one. There are occasional ceilidhs and the odd school PTA barn dance, but nothing regular.

A quick check on the excellent HarbertonFolk website shows only two upcoming folk dance events, one of which is my monthly contra dance. There are the clubs of course, especially Willand with its Saturday Night gigs, but none of those are really ceilidhs. Even going as far afield as Bridport doesn't get you even close to the sort of energy you got at a Great Western Ceilidh.

Where have all the ceilidh dancers gone? Have they moved on to other places or things? Have they just got too old? Maybe kidnapped by aliens? How can we have such a dearth of dance activity when Sidmouth, the home of the UK's biggest folk festival, is on our doorstep?

What can we do to encourage them out of wherever they've gone to hide? Suggestions on a post card, please...

Thinking about how to get people involved got me onto what makes a good ceilidh/barn dance. A large part of it is having the right people there. People willing to get up and have a good time and be a bit silly.

And to get it wrong. Often I hear from people at barn dances that the fun bit is when things go wrong. Really? Yes. If you do it all perfectly, it becomes more of a performance piece, and Riverdance it is not! It's fun to get it wrong and have a giggle, and fun when others do so too – as long as it doesn't collapse into chaos.

And here is another aspect of the caller's skill set that many do not see: picking the right dance for the audience. Not so easy that they get bored, not so difficult that the dance falls apart. The way I assess the difficulty of a dance is a combination of the moves involved, the formation, whether or not you stay with your partner, and recovery points. The last of these

is important. If a dance is in longways sets and ends with everyone swinging their partner then it's very easy to recover from total chaos. If it's a Sicilian circle, you can fix it if people end up out of sync but only if you have room in the choreography (eg it starts with RHS, LHS). For example you can't do that with the Old Swan Gallop, which is why I make absolutely sure they've got the progression before I start.

The caller can add to the fun by a well placed bon mot. A "just like we practised" always goes down well, as does "no the other Right". A sotto voce "I'm sooo glad we practised this" or "I'm soooo glad I did this dance" can also get a guffaw, and at the extreme end comments like "I'll just go and sort out the remedial set" will always get people laughing, and create a sense of competition between the sets. As with all deprecating humour though, you have to judge your audience right, and never, ever go too far.

This brings me to one of my regular rants about callers. I am particularly dismayed when callers come along with a set list all typed out. A caller should choose just the right dance for the dancers that are on the floor at that moment. That means selecting on the basis of the number of dancers, their general physical capability, and their performance in previous dances. Particularly in the early part of the dance I will look for "cancellation" dancers – those who limit what I can do. Young children are an obvious one (and easy to spot!) – no partner-changing dances for them. Dancers with limited physical abilities can rule out dances that are tight on time, and those who have struggled with any progression more complicated than "top couple down, all swing" have to be carefully managed.

I'm not suggesting these callers give people a bad time, just that they do such simple dances that people are unlikely to be inspired. The more we can give people at one-off barn dances a feel for what it can really be like, the more they are likely to join our dancing community.

Newton Bushel Morris



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or email

dave@newtonbushelmorris.uk

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phone our Squire, Rod on 01803 403153

Formed in 1972 we are a friendly mixed side performing traditional Cotswold Morris.
We dance every Thursday around Torbay, Newton Abbot and South Dartmoor.





Weaver of a folk world web

The Flaxey-Green website is an indispensable guide to what's happening in Devon. STEVE GILL talks to webmaster Trevor Paul about his work and music

STEVE: You were born in the south east of England, where exactly?

TREVOR PAUL: In Essex, in a small village on Dengie Marshes.

STEVE: What got you into folk?

TREVOR PAUL: Well, three things to be precise. The first was country dancing at school. The second was my father brought home a folk album called Speed the Plough by John Goodluck and the third was seeing a Morris side dance with such vigour that I was hooked.

STEVE: When did you move to Devon?

TREVOR PAUL: Around 1983. My wife knew someone who danced with Dartington. I went along to practice and there I met Nigel Sture and some other good musicians and started to show an interest in the music as well as the dancing.

STEVE: Did you play an instrument at all?

TREVOR PAUL: No, not until Nigel steered me towards an English concertina, advising me not to take up the melodeon as everybody plays one (*Steve smirks*).

STEVE: Why did you choose the name Flaxey-Green?

TREVOR PAUL: It was a tune played by Dave Shepherd of Blowzabella and I altered the spelling. I also had been given some free space on a website so I came up with the folk idea.

STEVE: How many hits does it get a week?

TREVOR PAUL: Between 150 and 200.

STEVE: You also play the Northumbrian small pipes.

TREVOR PAUL: Yes, they are not easy. I fell in love with North-East music after seeing Alistair Anderson – he was amazing.

STEVE: Tell me more about your time with Dartington Morris.

TREVOR PAUL: Well I practised and practised and was Squire on two occasions. I never played for them, only danced. I once dislocated my knee doing Leapfrog.

Fifteen years later I gave up.

STEVE: Do you have any plans in the future in folk?

TREVOR PAUL: Only really to keep learning new tunes.

STEVE: What are your likes and dislikes in the folk world?

TREVOR PAUL: I love a good music session but I am not keen on the people who disrespect the Morris by not taking it seriously and not making time to practise and not giving up when they become an embarrassment, giving it a bad name.

STEVE: Thank you for all the splendid work over the years and long may it continue as it is the only thing on the Internet that I look at regularly.

Well, some of us folkies do live in the past don't we!

● *If you haven't found it already, Trevor's website is at www.flaxey-green.co.uk*



The Mooncoin Ceilidh Band

South Devon based band
playing lively dance music with
a strong Irish flavour.

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Instruments include Melodeon,
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To book the band please contact
Anne & Steve Gill
01803 290427
annemgill@tiscali.co.uk

THE latest listings appear in the following section. However, events can be subject to change (especially at folk clubs) so we suggest you check before setting off.

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 accepts no responsibility for subsequent changes. Our website www.devonfolk.org.uk has the latest updates.

Please notify of us of any changes to contact details for clubs etc.

WILLAND FOLK DANCE CLUB

SATURDAY DANCES

Willand Village Hall

September 8 th	Ted Farmer and 3D
October 20 th	Jake Wood and English Contra Dance Band
November 24 th	Sarah Vanstone and The Dartmoor Pixie Band
December 22 nd	Robert Blackborow and Weston Country Band
Monday December 31 st	New Year's Eve Dance – Jane Thomas and Simon Maplesden and Chris Toyne's Big Band

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

Dance

Abbreviations: VH Village Hall, CH Church Hall

Alt Alternate

** Affiliated to EFDSS*

Aylesbeare Folk Dance Club

Alt Fri, Aylesbeare Ted Farmer, 01392 466326.

Beacons Wheel Chair Dancers

Sue Cummings 01803 554799

Bideford Country Dance Club*

Fri. Northam Hall, Fore St, Northam, Bideford EX39 1AN. John Blackburn, 01237 476632

Bideford Folk Dance Club*

Wed. Northam Hall. Chris Jewell, c/o Tor View, Lakenham Hill, Northam, Bideford, Devon. Tel: 01237 423554

Bridport Folk Dance Club* WI Hall, North Street, Bridport DT6 3JQ Every Monday exc holidays, 7.30 - 9.30pm. £3 members, Visitors £4, annual membership £3. Tel: Monty 01308 423442

Bridport Ceilidhs* Eight '1st' Saturday dances a year (not Apr, May, Jul, Aug) St Mary's Church House Hall, South Street, DT6 3NW. Tel: Monty 01308 423442 <http://www.bridportceilidhs.wordpress.com>

Chard Folk Dance Club

Alt Thurs, Combe St Nicholas VH. 7.30pm. Hillary Durrant Tel. 01460 61996

Chudleigh Folk Dance Club*

Mondays, term time. Woodway Room, Chudleigh Town Hall. 8-10 pm. Chudleigh Folk Music, 7-8.15 pm. Mary Marker, 01626 854141

Plymouth Country Dance*

Tues, Trinity United Reform Church Hall, Tor Lane, Hartley, Plymouth. 8pm. Jacqui Joint, Tel: 01752 774484 (Not June, July & August)

Crewkerne Folk Dance Club, Thurs, St Bartholomew's CH, Abbey Street, Crewkerne. 8pm Jean 01460 72505 or Leslye 01460 75760

D'Accord*

3rd Fri. 8pm. French & Breton dances, St Matthew's Hall, Summerlands Place, Newtown, Exeter EX1 2LJ. Pat Long 01392 811593

Dartington Folk*

Most Fridays, Dartington VH, 8pm Sheila Chappell 01392 882156

Devon Set Dancers*

Mrs Q Daniel, 6, Balmoral Close, Newton Abbot, TQ12 4BJ

Exeter Contra Dance

2nd Fri, St Katherine's Priory, Exeter, 7.30-10.30pm. (Beginners 7.30-8pm) Jeremy Child 01392 422119 contraexeter@gmail.com.

Exeter Folk Dance Club*

Public dances on no fixed day St Matthews' Hall, Lower Summerlands, Newtown Exeter EX1 2LJ <http://exeter.folkdancing.co.uk/>

Exmouth Folk Dance Group*

1st & 3rd Thurs, Not June, July and August. Withycombe Methodist CH. 8-10pm. Mr Chris Miles, 25, Old Bystock Drive, Exmouth, EX8 5RB. 01395 275592

Exmouth, Isca Scottish Dancers

Classes Tues & Wed, Sept-May. Mr & Mrs V.J. Tyler, 66, Ivydale, Exmouth. 01395 276913

Gittisham Folk Dance Club*

Wed, Gittisham VH, nr. Honiton. (1st Wed: Mackarness Hall, Honiton). 01404 813129 <https://gittishamfolkdanceclub.org/>

Halsway Folk Dance Club

1st & 3rd Wed. 8pm Halsway Manor (TA4 4BD), Bicknoller VH (TA4 4EQ) or Crowcombe VH (TA4 4AQ) Ring Brian Graham 01643 707294 to check venue.

Isca Allemanders American Square Dance Club

Tues. Kenn Centre, Kennford, 7.30pm Carol Lockton 01626 867392

Kilmington

Mon. Kilmington Village Hall 2-4pm Janet Bulpin 01297 33019

Kingsteignton Country Dance Club*

Tues, twice monthly. Church Hall. Mrs. Jean Foster, 1 Lowicke House, Ringslade Road, Newton Abbot, TQ12 1QF, Tel 01626 363887

Launceston Folk Dance Club

Tues. St John Ambulance Hall, 8pm (Not July & August) - Rosemary 01566 774491.

Newton Abbot

Wed. Irish set dancing, Jolly Farmer, Market Street. Maggie Daniel 01626 204350

Newton Poppleford American Square Dance classes, Village Hall, Station Road, Newton Poppleford, Sidmouth EX10 0ER.

Basic and Mainstream levels Thurs 2-4pm (except Aug) Plus level. Fri 10-12 noon. Tel Jean Stickland 01395 568155 or Janet Bulpin 01297 33019.

Dance

Salcombe Regis Folk Dance Club*

Fri. St Peter's Church Hall, Sidford. Mrs D. Cooper, 6 Darnell Close, Sidmouth. 01395 513131

Sidford Folk Dance Club*

Sidford VH, Byes Lane EX10 9QX. Tel Helen 01395 514161 or Val 01395 568336. 1st Tue usually Barn Dance (easier dances), others Social Dance.

Sidford Scottish Dance*

VH, Byes Lane EX10 9QX Mon. tel 01404 850416

South Hams Folk Dance Club*

Wed. West Charleton VH. Philip Worth, Greenbank, Hope Cove, TQ7 3HP. 01548 561415

South Brent Folk*

Eileen McKee, Woodland Cottage, South Brent, TQ10 9ES. 01364 73699

South Brent French Dance 1st Fri, Recreational Hall.

Tavistock Folk Dance Club*

Thurs. Town Hall, Bedford Square, PL19 0AU. (not July & Aug). Mrs Margaret Holt, 3, Copperfields, Horrabridge, Yelverton, PL20 7VB. 01822 855858

Teign Playford Club*

Mrs Jean Foster, 1 Lowicke House, Ringslade Road, Newton Abbot, TQ12 1QF 01626 363887

Totnes Scottish Folk Dance

Dance classes, Tues. King Edward VI School, 7.15pm. Details: 01803 557821

University of Exeter Folk Dance Club Richard Mason, 3, Kingfisher Drive, Exeter, EX4 4SN. 01392 411434

Willand Folk Dance Club*

Alt. Thurs. Willand VH. Zena Roberts, 7, Everett Place, Tiverton, EX16 6UN. 01884 253546

Wiveliscombe FDC 2nd & 4th Tues, Sept-May.

Song and Music

Club name in **bold** = Advert in What's Afoot

APPLEDORE

The Champ, 5 Meeting Street, Appledore (nr Bideford), EX39 1RJ. Rob Jenkins 01271 378321

BEAWORTHY

The Devil's Stone Inn Shebbear, Beaworthy EX21 5RU, 2nd Tuesday

Bere Ferrers

Old Plough. 01822 841064. 3rd Sun song & music, 1st & 3rd Tues music session

Bideford

Bideford Folk Club*.Thurs. Joiners Arms, John Purser 01237 424286 or email bidefolk@gmail.com

Bishopsteignton

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

Bodmin

Bodmin Folk Club. Fri, Bodmin Band & Social Club, Honey Street, Bodmin PL31 2DL
www.bodminfolk.co.uk

Bow

1st Wed Irish music session White Hart, Bow.

Bradninch

2nd Tue. Acoustic Music Club, West End Hall, West

End Road EX4 4QW. Colin Wilson 01392 882036.
Folk club 1st Tue. Old White Lion, guest night 3rd Tue. Castle Hotel. 8.30pm. Rob Reeves, 01392 881014

Brendon

3rd Sat. Song, Staghunters. Carole Henderson-Begg, 01769 540581

Brixham

Brixham Folk Club. 1st Fri. The Old Coaching Inn, 61 Fore Street, TQ5 8AG, Steve and Anne Gill 01803 290427

3rd Wed. The Golden Lion 65 New Road, TQ5 8NL, David Lee 01803 846 346

Bude

Sun. twice monthly. Falcon Hotel. Debbie Merritt 01409 254144 or see www.budefolk.com

Calstock

2nd Tues. The Boot Inn, Fore Street, PL18 9RN Tel Mike 07725 579718

Carhampton (nr Minehead)

2nd Fri. The Blazing Stump Folk Club, Butcher's Arms TA24 6LP (01643 821333, Lynda Baker: 01643 702994, lyndabaker731@gmail.com

Chittlehampton

1st Fri. concerts, usually in Parish Church. Preconcert

Song and Music 2

supper if pre-booked. 01769 540581 or 540887.

events@chumpchurches.org.uk

2nd Mon. music session, Bell Inn

Combe Martin

2nd & 4th Sat. **Shammick Acoustic**, Pack of Cards.

Tom & Barbara Brown, 01271 882366.

www.shammickacoustic.org.uk

Chipshop (nr. Tavistock)

4th Tues, 8pm Copper Penny Inn, PL19 8NT (01822

833288, 07725 579718) mitilmusic@gmail.com

Coleford

Last Tues, 8pm Acoustic night

The New Inn Coleford, Crediton EX17 5BZ

Tel: 01363 84242

Crediton

Alt Thurs Crediton West Gallery Quire

Tel: Sonja Andrews 01363 877216

Denbury

Thurs. Union Inn. Acoustic mixed sessions.

Steve Bassett, 01803 812537

Exeter

Barnfield Theatre 1st Fri. Bedford Room. Acoustic

open mic session. Jerry 07843 419178

Exeter Folk & Acoustic Music Club

Last Fri. Victoria Park Tennis Club, St Leonards. Peter

Cornelius 01392 210983. Also guest nights

www.exeterfolkclub.org

Exmouth

3rd & 5th Tues. 8.30pm. Manor Hotel, Beacon,

Exmouth. Jeff Lewis 01395 269232

Lee Mill (nr Plymouth)

Folk On The Moor. Sun. Concerts once a month and

singers nights. Sun. 7.45pm Westward Inn, Lee Mill.

See www.moorfolk.co.uk or contact Anton Horwich,

4, The Green, Milton Combe, Yelverton,

01822 853620

Halsway Manor (Crowcombe)

1st Sun. Song & music session in the bar lounge.

Brendon Room. 01984 618324

Haytor

1st Fri, 7pm Tinpickle Session, Tinpickle and Rhum,

The Moorland, Dartmoor National Park TQ13 9XT

(01364 661407)

Kingsteignton

Mon. 7.30pm Acoustic Warehouse

Open Mic Music Club, Estuary Courtyard, Passage

House Inn. Nigel 07989 180091

Lympstone

4th Wed. Lympstone Folk, Roots and Acoustic, The

Saddler's Arms, Exmouth Road, Lympstone EX8 5LS.

(4th) 01395 225075/07741409265

Marldon

3rd Friday Ye Olde Smokey House, Vicarage Road,

Marldon, TQ3 1NN. Folk Plus Acoustic Music Club.

Paul 07894 961010 or 01803 550153.

Methevell

1st Sat, Church House Inn, Linkinhorne. October to

March. Mike Warman 01579 382711

Minehead

Acorn Folk Club. Sat, 4 times a year. 07811 744158

or email acornfolkclub@googlemail.com

Nadderwater (Exeter)

3rd Tues. Royal Oak Traditional song, mostly

unaccompanied.

1st Thursday Royal Oak Singing and instrumental

folk session.

Okehampton

Last Sun. Okey Folky. Plume of Feathers. Mixed

music and song session Debbie 07773479375

Penny Moor

Penny Moor Singaround* 3rd Wed. Cruwys Arms.

Jon Shapley 01363 83740

Last Sun, music session Cruwys Arms. Biddy

Mallabone 01271 373 305 Jon Shapley 01363 83740

Plymouth

2nd Wed. Plymouth Folk Roots Hyde, Mutley.

Ali 01752 662002

1st Sun, Morley Arms. Bluegrass, skiffle. 3rd Sun

Open acoustic. 3-6pm

1st Sun, Plymouth, Barbican, Dolphin 1.30pm.

Tel Greg 01752 660876

Sandford

1st Tue. Lamb Inn. Paul & Hazel 01363 776275

Scorriton

4th Sun. 7.30pm. Tradesman's Arms Sue & Simon

Williams, Scorriton Farmhouse, Scorriton,

Buckfastleigh TQ11 0JB 01364 631308.

Seaton

Jurassic Folk - Eyre Court, 2, Queen Street, Seaton.

3rd Wed: Music jam session. Adrian 01404 549903

or Mike 01404 4342

Song and Music 3

South Brent

Pack Horse Hotel, Alt Tues. 8.30pm. Song. Eileen KcKee 01364 73699

Oak (formerly Royal Oak) Wed. 8.30pm. Music. Caroline 01364 631308 (Alt Wed children's folk 8-9pm). 3rd Thurs, music session with Mick Bramich.

South Zeal

3rd Mon music session email
Markbazeyleymobile@gmail.com

Sticklepath (Okehampton)

1st Sun. Devonshire Inn. Derek Moore 01837 840316

Teignmouth

Last Thurs. **Teignmouth Folk Club**. Oystercatcher Cafe, Northumberland Place. Martyn Hillstead, 01626 778071.

Topsham

Topsham Folk Club* holds monthly concerts in Matthews Hall, Fore Street Topsham EX3 0HF and singers nights at the Globe Hotel 8pm. See website

www.topshamfolkclub.org for details or call John Stephens 01392 875332

Torquay

3rd Mon Open Mic. Artizan Gallery 01803 428626. Robert Spence

Totnes

2nd Thurs **Totnes Folk Song Club**. Dartmouth Inn. Steve & Anne Gill, 01803 290427.

1st & 3rd Mon. open session (English) 2nd & 4th Mon. open session (Irish). 2nd & 4th Wed. mostly traditional song unaccompanied Bay Horse

Uffculme

Culm Music & Performance Club, Uffculme Village Hall, 5 Bridge Street EX15 3AX. Last Wed. Brian Bennellick, 01884 840192

Willand

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

Morris and other display

(F - Morris Federation, R Morris Ring, Open Morris member) Day indicates regular practice night/dance out night

Alive & Kicking (F)

Appalachian. Jo Wright 01392 462531

Angletwitch (F)

Elizabeth Wozniak 01271 325425

Beltane (F)

Border, Harriet White.
harrietewhite@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)

Grace Brand 01598 740645
bag@borderlinemorris.org

Bovey Tracey Mummers (R)

Rod Wilkins 01803 812581

Bradninch Millers Morris (F)

Duncan Harrington 01884 855270

Cat's Eye Border (F)

Sally Safford 07768 613894
www.catseymorris.co.uk

Cogs & Wheels (F)

Debbie Jessop
debbie@jessop.com (Thurs)

Countess Isabella's Automata (F)

Doug Bleazey 01392 670393

Dartmoor Border (F)

Mark Tregaskis 01752 299700

Dartington Morris Men (R)

Roy Hartwell, 01548 831159
bagman@dartingtonmorrismen.org.uk (Fri)

Exeter Morris Men (R)

Mike Painter, 19, Marlborough Road, Exeter, EX2 4TJ. 01392 660444. (Thurs)
mikepainter25@gmail.com

Exmoor Border Morris (F)

Marlene Cann, marlenecann61@yahoo.co.uk (Wed)

Firestone

(Appalachian & Irish). Richard Mason, 3, Kingfisher Drive, Exeter, EX4 4SN. 01392 411434

Glory of the West Morris (F)

Carol Mantell, Beggars Roost, Higher Ashton, Exeter, EX6 7QR 01647 252740 (Wed)

Great Western Morris Men (F)

Mike Boston bagman@greatwestern.org.uk (Mon)

Green Willow Clog (F)

Marilyn McKechnie 01803 524110

Grimspound Border Morris (F)

Lee Merry, 8, Waterside, Bovey Tracey, TQ139SX
lmerry@live.co.uk

Harberton Navy (F)

Jan Culf JanCulf@harberton.co.uk

Heather & Gorse (F)

Maggie Anderson
mag2anderson@yahoo.co.uk

Morris and other display

Ifracombe Red Petticoats (F)

Linda Corcoran, 5, Stanbury Rd,
Knowle, EX332NR
lindacorcoran@btopenworld.
com

Isambard Gasket Rats (F)

Debs : 01626 770238
bag@isambardsgasketrats.co.uk

Kings Arms Pace Egg & Mummers*

Dave Denford, The Cottage,
Ramsley, SouthZeal, EX10 2LD

Lodestone Border (F)

lodestonemorris@hotmail.co.uk

Mayhem Border Morris (O)

Wellington. Gordon 07789
796993

Newton Bushel Morris (F)

Dave Warren, 07773 088445
dave@newtonbushelmorris.uk

North Devon Mummers

Francis & Barbara Verdigi, 01271
861553

Old Town Twelves

Alison Chapman, 07541 385463

Otter Morris

Benji Upchurch 07986 175612

Plymouth Maids (O)

Sue Hawes, 01752 345054
plymouthmaids@hotmail.com

Plymouth Morris Men (R)

Joe Cumming, 01752 217684
www.plymouthmorrismen.org.uk

Raddon Hill Clog Morris (F)

Barry Lewis 01395 443408

Rough Diamonds Appalachian

01460 220607

Shuffle The Deck (F)

Appalachian. Kathy Houlihan
01752 893335

Sidmouth Steppers

NW Morris (F)

Ruth Lewis, 07976 251929
steppers@sidmouthsteppers.
com

Sidmouth Traditional Mummers

Henry Piper, 21B, Broad Street,
Ottery 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

Uplyme Morris Men (R)

Timothy Fox 01297 443072

Tudor Dance Group

Elizabeth Thurgood, Brookfield,
Combe Water, Cotleigh,
Honiton, EX14 9SQ. 01404
831512

Winkleigh Morris (F)

(Tues) Angela Haines, Hollacott,
Hollocombe, Chulmleigh EX18
7QE 01837 83219

daveyhaines@btinternet.com

Wreckers Border (F)

wreckers.bag@gmail.com

Exeter Folk & Acoustic Music Club

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

Friday 31st August

Friday 14th September

Friday 28th September

Friday 12th October

Friday 26th October

Friday 9th November

Friday 30th November

Open Club Night

Guest – Paul Downes

Open Club Night

Guest – Barron Brady

Open Club Night

Guest – Clive Gregson

Open Club Night

Friday 14th or 21st December – TBA – Christmas Party Open Club Night

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



Picture courtesy of Eleanor Warren

WELSH WIZARDS: Widders Border Morris from Chepstow slug it out on the prom

THE 20th Teignmouth Folk Festival was blessed with fabulous weather once again and went without any major hiccups.

The three main concerts were fairly well attended and Crows headlined our opening concert on Friday night in a new venue, Bitton House Council Chambers.

Scottish singer Ian Bruce was with us for the weekend and not only headlined the Saturday night concert but also provided an informal “meet the artist” on Sunday morning.

He then joined eight other singers and musicians in a traditional style concert on Sunday afternoon in the United Reformed Church with MC Barry Lister.

We were pleased to welcome back Spinach for Norman for the Saturday night Ceilidh which was very well attended.

Local bands Celt and Paddy’s Whiskers

delighted the crowds as did Lazy Jacks Shanty Crew.

Twenty five morris sides danced around the town and on the promenade during the weekend with all sides having a chance to perform in front of a large crowd around the Triangle stage. It was wonderful to see so many local sides supporting us again this year as well as regular sides from further afield – such as the Widders (“Feared throughout the land!”) From Chepstow.

It is always a pleasure to welcome new sides to Teignmouth Folk Festival and this year we had three new sides, Fleet Morris from Hampshire, Pigsty from Bristol and Shoostriing Appalachian from South Wales.

Plans are under way for the 2019 festival for the weekend of June 21-23.

Steve Gill and Sarah Dillon

Morris Matters



All Teignmouth pictures courtesy of ELEANOR WARREN of Widders Border Morris from Chepstow



A CONTROVERSIAL claim made to me by that well known journalistic source, “a bloke in a pub” was: “Teignmouth is a better festival for morris dancers than Sidmouth because there are far more places to dance and you aren’t crowded out by all those @@@@ing stalls along the front.” What’s Afoot couldn’t possibly comment so instead, let’s just have some pictures of morris at various locations during the 2018 Teignmouth festival.



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|----------|---|
| Aug. 11 | Closed |
| Aug. 25 | Quicksilver, a stunning singer and an exceptional guitarist, with humour! |
| Sept. 8 | Open Night, featuring Winter Wilson |
| Sept. 22 | Colum Sands, Irish songwriter, warm, witty and moving – man and songs |
| Oct. 13 | Open Night |
| Oct. 27 | Cosmotheke, renowned music hall performers, back in full form as a trio |
| Nov. 10 | Open Night |
| Nov. 24 | Moira Craig & Carolyn Robson, delightful renditions of ballads and songs |
| Dec. 8 | Open Night |
| Dec. 22 | Vicki Swan & Jonny Dyer's Winter Warmer – in costume too! |



Victory for the village against all the odds



FOR a village, South Brent punches well above its weight with its folk day.

Which is just as well, because this year it faced some pretty tough opposition: not only a heatwave that threatened to leave many sprawled in their gardens or heading to the beach but also the crucial match between England and Sweden.

However, there was a splendid turnout for the

evening concert, which featured Ange Hardy (pictured top right), Nick Wyke and Becki Driscoll (top left) and Bill Murray (right).

The big heat did pose an unusual problem as the doors of the village hall had to be left open for the big concert to help cool the venue.

And as Ange Hardy said when demonstrating her looper: "It plays back whatever I sing into it. The

Festival Time 2



HOT TO TROT: Green Willow Clog and Newton Bushel Morris brave the heat at the South Brent Folk Day

hall is next to the railway line, so if a train goes past – you'll hear it over and over again."

Right on cue, a Plymouth-bound express hurtled past, just before she began her song. How did she persuade a train to act as a sideman?

It was a quiet evening otherwise – even the bellringers of St Petroc's church had finished their annual ringing festival. Earlier, there were even more bells, when the Folk Day held a handbell ringing workshop led by the Plympton Clangers.

South Brent also offered dance displays by Newton Bushel Morris and Green Willow Clog, a song session in The

Packhorse and a music session at The Oak and an afternoon concert. This featured songwriter Owly Dave with Whistling Paddy, Roger Smith from Saltash and Essex-to-Wessex duo Foxen.

The last word to Ange Hardy, who posted on Facebook: "Huge thanks to

the team at South Brent Folk Day, we had a wonderful gig last night. Much like the England team, they did everything they could to make sure the evening was a huge success. They put thought into their approach, (great line up, lovely dynamic) and it was a resounding win."



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Devon Folk News

THIS year's AGM was held at Chudleigh Community Hall and attendance was rather disappointing.

It followed a successful Music Workshop and Tea Dance on the theme of Modern Playford-style Dances. During the morning Mary Marker led 27 musicians, playing a variety of instruments, in practising the tunes. In the afternoon, they played the music while Jean Foster called the Tea Dance for 31 dancers. This enjoyable event increased Devon Folk funds by over £100.

The Devon Folk committee continues to have several vacancies and is always pleased to welcome new members to the committee. Full committee meetings are usually held near Exeter four times a year, on a Saturday morning, in addition to the business meeting held after the AGM.

SPECIAL OFFER TO MEMBERS OF THE EFDSS

FREE membership of Devon Folk used to be granted automatically to any member of the English Folk Dance and Song Society living in Devon because Cecil Sharp House passed on names and addresses to Devon Folk.

Due to Data Protection Legislation they can no longer do this. So if, as an EFDSS member, you would like to take up the offer of free membership of Devon Folk and any other benefits that this might entail, please send your name, address and EFDSS membership number to:

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Ride out with the ghostly horseman

***John Arscott, pictured right,
was a Wicked Squire of the
old school but he inspired a
supernatural legend and a
ballad that is ripe for revival***



"THIS song, once vastly popular in North Devon, and at all hunting dinners, is now nearly forgotten," said Sabine Baring-Gould of The Hunting of Arscott Of Tetcott.

What's Afoot became worried that this hunting ballad from Songs Of The West was neglected and decided to reprint it. No sooner had the decision been taken than Jim Causley turned up at Gidsong, the splendid monthly session at Gidleigh Village Hall and sang a rousing version.

Although he recorded it on his 2005 album, *Fruits Of The Earth* (available from WildGoose) he admitted he hadn't sung it for a while.

At 10 verses, it takes a bit of memorising but it's worth the effort and it has a rip-roaring chorus. It relates – or probably romanticises - a fox-hunt led by John Arscott, squire of Tetcott. He and his companions chase a fox across Devon, from Tetcott to Penkenner, where, the ballad implies, they all plunge over the cliffs into the sea.

This is a bit of embroidery, probably by Baring-Gould, because, Arscott, the last of his line, died at home in and was buried at Tetcott in 1788. The ballad's final verses cast the squire as a ghostly huntsman, pursuing a phantom fox

across the county with his hounds in full cry:

*For Arscott of Tetcott loves hunting so well,
That he breaks for the pastime from Heaven –
or Hell.*

"There are men alive who declare they have heard his horn, and seen him and his hounds go by in the park at Tetcott," writes Baring-Gould.

Accounts of Arscott's life make it more likely that he's broken out of Hell, for, according to Baring-Gould, he well fitted the description of the wicked, old squire. If he disapproved of the priest's Bible reading in church, he would pelt him with apples.

He employed the last of the jester dwarfs, Black John. Baring-Gould writes of Black John: "One of his jokes, that entertained the company after dinner, was to tie together by the legs several live mice and swallow them one by one, and then, by means of a string, pull them up from his interior parts again.

"Another of his tricks was to mumble a sparrow. The living bird was gripped by the legs by his teeth, and then with his lips and teeth he would rip off the feathers, till he had plucked the unfortunate sparrow bare.

"A couple of projecting fangs were of especial value as sparrow-holders to Black John. His

A Devon Song

hands all the while were knotted or tied behind his back.”

Well, before television, people had to make their own entertainment as best they could.

Arcscott had another follower, Doggett, whom he called “my son, Simon”. He appears in the song. Doggett may have written a version of the ballad but Baring-Gould is rather contemptuous of his efforts: “He probably followed the habit of all rural bards of using for his purpose an earlier ballad, and spoiling and vulgarising it.”

You can't trust the common people with folk music, he implies, and says he has recast the song from a dozen other versions.

The “Sons of the Blue” in the song puzzled the parson. It seems to mark them as naval men but he believes Arcscott's companions on this epic ride were Sir John Molesworth, William Morshead, of Blisland, and Bradden Clode, of Skisdome and neither Molesworth nor Morshead were naval men.

Maybe the Sons of the Blue was a club for drinking and singing bawdy ballads. These were very popular pastimes, Baring-Gould informs us with a shudder.

Whatever the truth, this is a fine song that should run and run – like Doggett, who was said to be such a terrific runner that he could follow Arcscott and his hounds on foot all day and still get home before them.



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A Devon Song

The Hunting of Arcscott of Tetcott

Collected by Baring-Gould

The image shows a musical score for a song. It consists of six staves of music in G major and 3/8 time. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first line of music is: "In the month of Nov - em - ber in the year fif - ty - two Three". The second line is: "joll - y fox hunt - ers, all Sons of the Blue. Came o'er from Pen - car - row, not". The third line is: "fearing a wet coat To take their di - ver - sion with Ars - cott of Tet - cott Sing". The fourth line is: "fol - de - rol, lol - de - rol, lol - de - rol - lol. Sing fol - de - rol, lol - de - rol,". The fifth line is: "lol - de - rol - lol Come, o'er from Pen - car - row, not". The sixth line is: "fearing a wet coat To take their di - ver sion with Ars - cott of Tetcott."

In the month of November, in the year fifty -two,
Three jolly Fox-hunters, all Sons of the Blue,
Came o'er from Pencarrow, not fearing a wet coat,
To take their diversion with Arcscott of Tetcott.

Chorus

Sing - fol - de - rol, lol - de - rol, lol de rol lol

Sing - fol - de - rol, lol - de - rol, lol de rol lol

Came o'er from Pencarrow, not fearing a wet coat,
To take their diversion with Arcscott of Tetcott.

The day - light was dawning, right radiant the morn,
When Arcscott of Tetcott he winded his horn;
He blew such a flourish, so loud in the hall,
The rafters resounded, and danced to the call.

In the kitchen the servants, in kennel the hounds,
In the stable the horses were roused by the sounds,
On Black-Cap in saddle sat Arcscott, "To day
I will show you good sport, lads, Hark! follow, away!"

A Devon Song

They tried in the coppice, from Becket to Thorn,
There were Ringwood and Rally, and Princess and Scorn;

Then out bounded Reynard, away they all went,
With the wind in their tails, on a beautiful scent.

"Hark, Vulcan!" said Arcscott, "The best of good hounds!
Heigh Venus!" he shouted, "How nimbly she bounds!
And nothing re-echoes so sweet in the valley,
As the music of Rattler, of Phil -pot, and Rally."

They hunted o'er fallow, o'er field and on moor,
And never a hound, man or horse would give o'er.
Sly Reynard kept distance for many a mile,
And no one dismounted for gate or for stile.

"How far do you make it?" said Simon, the Son,
"The day that's declining will shortly be done."
"We'll follow till Doom's Day," quoth Arcscott, before
They hear the Atlantic with menacing roar.

Thro' Whitstone and Poundstock, St Gennys they run,
As a fireball, red, in the sea set the sun.
Then out on Penkenner — a leap, and they go,
Full five hundred feet to the ocean be -low.

When the full moon is shining as clear as the day, -
John Arcscott still hunteth the country, they say;
You may see him on Black-Cap, and hear, in full cry
The pack from Pencarrow to Dazard go by.

When the tempest is howling, his horn you may hear,
And the bay of his hounds in their headlong career;
For Arcscott of Tetcott loves hunting so well,
That he breaks for the pastime from Heaven — or Hell.

THIS ballad came from Baring-Gould's Songs Of The West but there are many other old books that may contain hidden gems. It's always worth checking through the attic and dusty old shops for publications from the heyday of folk song collecting – you never know what you might stumble across. If you do discover a "lost" song from Devon then What's Afoot would be very glad to hear about it.

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Reviews

ECHOES OF ALFRED

Bob & Gill Berry WGS427CD

BOB and Gill were 50 per cent of the group Tinkers Bag and are very well-known on the folk scene, as indeed were Bob's parents whom I saw at the old Torquay Folk Club in the early Eighties. As you would expect, all four could sing at a very high level and Bob and Gill, of course, still do.

Although they sing together on some tracks, this CD is more of a "your go and then mine" affair and there is nothing wrong with that. All tracks are traditional, except a Miggy Campbell number, *Days of Summer*, and a music hall delivery of *I was Much Better Off In The Army* by Bob. This and the last track, *Out With My Dog In The Morning*, would be my favourites, slightly odd as Gill is the stronger singer in my opinion.

I am very keen on unaccompanied singing but the songs with backing do really come alive.

Traditional fans will love this collection of songs. Although many will probably be familiar with most of them, some have been adapted with their own arrangements. The informative sleeve notes say they were greatly influenced by the research by Bob's parents into the songs collected in Oxfordshire by Alfred Williams and others such as Roy Palmer and Frank Kidson.

Do visit Bob and Gill at their folk club in Devises, even if it is just to see Gill's lovely smile.

Steve Gill

EVER REMEMBERED

Colin Andrews 2LF 005

YOU know a CD is good when you listen to it and immediately think: "I'll steal that song – and that tune as well."

Those who know Colin Andrews will not be surprised that this album contains plenty of pinchable items. He not only produces good material but he also has that indispensable gift for a songwriter: an ear for a good ballad or tune.

So we are treated not only to Colin's tunes, such as *Les Manches De Jeanne* but also *Orinoco*, one he picked up from fiddler Georgia Nettleton. They are teamed up with *Uttoxeter Swing* (and I was looking for a good tune to follow *Swing*). We also

get Colin's comic songs such as *Who Gives A Hoot?* (also the title of one of his books – he is a very versatile chap) and a parody of Cyril Tawney's *Sammy's Bar – The Last Bus Is Leaving* – which will certainly resonate with anyone who has had to use public transport in Devon.

A stand-out song is *Tommy Get Your Shoes Put On*, written by Linda Woodroffe about the Aberfan disaster. Colin's strong voice can handle this very moving piece as easily as he performs comic material such as *When I Came Home* and the ancient *Ballad Of Sir Bevis* (mercifully edited down by Colin to nine verses from its original 45).

His voice sounds good solo but he also accompanies himself on some tracks on melodeon guitar and concertina. He gets vocal support from wife, Sonja, on the final song, *Only Remembered*, and support from fellow Winkleigh Morris and Winkeilidh Band musicians, John Golightly and Duncan Andrew. Over the years, Colin has put a

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lot of effort into supporting the folk movement, through his editorship of *What's Afoot*, running singarounds and his work with morris.

It's good to see him doing something for himself for a change.

John Foxen

FAR & WIDE

Nick Dow

IN Nick Dow's second CD of unaccompanied songs, much of his material comes from his friends in the Gypsy and Travellers community or traditional singers in the south of England.

He has also found extra verses for *Searching for Lambs* and *The Wreck of the Northfleet*. Other songs cover ghosts, sorrow, unrequited love, comic or true love. The varied pace and rhythm to suit the theme adds to the variety.

Nick has combined different versions of some songs and occasionally he writes extra verses to complement the traditional lines.

I enjoyed these traditional sea and country songs with a story to tell. Nick himself says "having a good voice is only half the battle. To communicate and engage an audience the singer needs to be a storyteller and vary the melody and tone of the song accordingly". In front of an audience, the story can be expanded but on a CD the story has to hold the listener's attention purely by the way the song is sung.

Nick does this well in each of the songs and varies them by changes of pace and vocal character. He even attempts a "tuning" (mouth music) after *The Dark Eyed Gypsy* having been encouraged to do so by his Traveller friends. His

version of this song, which is in the same group as *Gypsy Davey* and *Raggle Taggle Gypsies*, was sung by Sam Gorman and the mouth music is in the style of music that Nick's wife, Mally, danced to on the top step of a gypsy caravan as a child.

Carole Henderson Begg

A WHISPER IN THE RUSHES

Biddy Mallabone

Biddy, well known on the Devon folk scene from her association with the Pennymoor Singaround, has at long last, produced her first CD.

As mentioned in the previous *What's Afoot*, she recorded at Johns Park Studio in Exbourne, her settings of her mother's poems, with support from Moira Viggers on violin and producer Geoff Hodgkinson on bass, provide interesting listening.

The most haunting song is *Deadman's Pool*, with its suggestion of otherworldly doom – a video created by Geoff Hodgkinson can be found at <https://vimeo.com/272187458>

The poems cover a variety of subjects, including

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Reviews

encounters with a *Sandy Cat* and a *Witch's Daughter*. One that made me smile particularly is *In Disgrace*, the confessions of a bad child which could have sprung from the pages of AA Milne's *Now We Are Six*.

The album is a very creditable effort by Biddy and her mother and will certainly please those who know and love Biddy's singing.

John Foxen

REALLY BEAUTIFUL COMPANY

Carol Davies

Matador

ISBN 9781788035996

£12.99

CAROL Davies and her folk song collector husband, Gwilym, have been instrumental in the last few years in obtaining National Lottery funding for the groundbreaking project, *The Single Gloucester*, and its associated website, www.glostrad.com. The latter brings together on-line traditional songs and music collected in Gloucestershire. In the course of her

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Reviews

research for the project and from the records of Cecil Sharp, Percy Grainger, and other early folk song collectors, Carol gathered much information about the lives and communities of people from whom the songs and tunes were collected.

Her book, *Really Beautiful Company*, presents a fascinating and detailed background to the singers and musicians whose legacy lives on many, many years after their death.

In the first chapter, Carol focuses on the village of Sherborne and the Forest of Dean area. There is much to interest morris dancers here, with many links between singers, musicians and the highly regarded Sherborne Morris Men of the time.

It is regrettable to think that far more of the Forest of Dean's Morris traditions could have survived had the interest in collecting started a few decades earlier.

Subsequent chapters look at the occupations of the singers and musicians, material that was

collected from people having to live out their lives in a workhouse, and from gypsy families Gwilym Davies got to know, in particular Wiggy Smith and the Brazil family. There are also chapters on female singers and musicians and singers of comic songs.

Throughout are examples of collected songs and tunes, and the appendices list the material attributed to those mentioned in the book, and a gazetteer of the places where they lived.

There is a considerable amount of family history, and the relationships can be confusing – particularly when the same Christian names are passed on through generations. Thankfully, Carol has included family trees.

As a singer and musician, I find it so easy to concentrate on words and tunes of traditional material and pay little attention to the source. For Gloucestershire sources, at least, this book should help redress the balance.

Colin Andrews



Saturday 20th October 2018

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A purpose-built recording venue for all genres of music

We invite musicians, singers and bands across the South West to create their next masterpiece at Devon's newest studio

OPENING OFFER: FREE sessions for original material



40 sq. ms. recording space

Shure, Beyer, Rode, AKG, Sennheiser mics

Studio One DAW + 16 track interface

Autotune, Revoice and Melodyne correction software

EZ Drummer; Midi Instrumentation; Piano

3 hectares to roam; summer house, well, derelict cottage,
tree house, orchard! Stunning North Dartmoor views

Call Geoff on 07831 138 318 or email: geoff@ggh.co.uk

 [johnsparkstudio](https://www.facebook.com/johnsparkstudio)

www.johnsparkstudio.rocks

the plough

ARTS CENTRE

Great Torrington

Box Office: 01805 624624

www.theploughartscentre.org

Music
Theatre
Comedy
Poetry
Dance
Film



Gallery
Workshops
Café
Exhibitions
Satellite
Screenings

Forthcoming Musical Events

Folk/Americana Music

Nick Wyke & Becki Driscoll

Saturday 21 April 8pm at The George Hotel

Charlie Dore

Sunday 22 April 7:30pm at St Anne's, Barnstaple

Calan

Friday 27 April 8pm at The George Hotel

Kathryn Roberts & Sean Lakeman

Saturday 5 May 8pm

Gilmore & Roberts

Saturday 26 May 8pm at The George Hotel

Reg Meuross

Wednesday 30 May 8pm at St Anne's Barnstaple

Lewis Clarke & The Essentials

Thursday 7 June 8pm at The George Hotel

Jinaki Tix

Saturday 9 June 8pm at St Anne's Barnstaple

Bookends Simon & Garfunkel Story

Saturday 16 June 8pm

Sunday 17 June 7:30pm at Lynton Town Hall

Alaw

Saturday 23 June 8pm at The George Hotel

Edwina Hayes & Flossie Malavalle

Sunday 8 July 7:30pm

Hillfolk Noir

Thursday 19 July 8pm at The George Hotel

The Rancheros

Saturday 21 July 8pm

Ninebarrow

Thursday 25 October 8pm at The George Hotel

Other Musical Highlights

Andy Irvine

Thursday 5 April 8pm

The Dine Notes (New Orleans Jazz)

Friday 6 April 8:30pm

Maggie Bell & Dave Kelly

Thursday 12 April 8pm at The George Hotel

Giles Robson Band

Saturday 21 April 8pm

Harriet

Friday 4 May 8pm

Femi & The Inrhythms

Saturday 2 June 8pm

Anda Union

Wednesday 20 June 8pm

Talon (The Eagles tribute)

Friday 29 June 8pm

The Manfreds

Thursday 5 July 8pm

b

Paul Lamb & The Kingsmokes

Friday 13 July 8pm

Wizz Jones

Saturday 4 August 8pm at The George Hotel

Elevation Festival

Saturday 4 August 1pm until late

The Beach Boys Tribute Band

Thursday 9 August 8pm

The Jersey Boys

Friday 24 August 8pm

Chico Chica (Latin Jazz)

Tuesday 28 8pm at The George Hotel