

### What is the Morris?

Morris dancing is a very ancient English tradition which has been around for centuries. In Shakespeare's day it was going strong, and we know for certain that there was Morris dancing in Leicester in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century because a group of men were hauled up before the magistrates for dancing the Morris in the wrong place at the wrong time! Nobody knows how it all started, or even why it's called Morris. Is it an ancient fertility rite, is it to do with the cycle of the seasons, is it magic to make the sun shine? Do jingling bells wake up the earth, and clashing sticks keep off evil spirits? Who knows – but we enjoy doing it and bringing a smile to people's faces.

In the Summer **LEICESTER MORRISMEN** perform dances from the Cotswold villages, waving hankies or clashing sticks – the sort of thing most people think of as Morris dancing. We dress in white clothes with a black baldrick (that's the crossed straps over the shirt) and the Leicester cinquefoil on our chests, and wear straw hats decorated with ribbons and flowers. Bell-pads round our shins help emphasise the rhythm of the music.

In Winter we turn into **RED LEICESTER** – what else? We do dances from the Border tradition which are more earthy and emphatic. For this style we dress in darker clothes and put on multi-coloured tatter-coats. We wear top-hats or bowlers decorated with feathers and paint our faces red, and call ourselves That rattle on our faces can get anywhere, so look out – you may not know where we are, but you can tell where we've been!



### THE LUCK OF THE MORRIS

The dances are said to bring good luck and fertility to the onlookers - especially those who contribute to the collection.

**If you enjoy our dancing please give generously,  
as we support a number of charities.**

The local causes we support include Rainbows Children's Hospice, Cruse Bereavement Care, Diabetes UK, Friends of Sycamore Court, LOROS, Shuttlewood-Clarke Foundation, and whatever else takes our fancy.

**Last year we gave well over fourteen hundred pounds to charity – help us to beat it this year.**

### Who are LEICESTER MORRISMEN?

We are a group of guys who enjoy ourselves! We meet up every week, either to learn the dances, or to perform them in public. Our group was formed in 1953, and we've been going strong ever since. We have young men and old but all share a passion for keeping the old tradition alive, dancing the Morris all over Leicestershire – and lots of other places besides. We practise in the Winter at St Stephen's Church Hall in the middle of Leicester, and new men are welcome, whether dancers or musicians. You bring the enthusiasm, and we'll teach you the moves. Interested? – just talk to any of the lads!

For further information about  
**LEICESTER MORRISMEN**

and all bookings, enquiries, etc,  
contact the Bagman,  
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[www.leicestermorrismen.co.uk](http://www.leicestermorrismen.co.uk)

**LEICESTER MORRISMEN  
ARE MEMBERS OF  
THE MORRIS RING**  
(The National Association  
of Men's Morris and Sword Dance Clubs)



**LEICESTER MORRISMEN 2012**





# Where to see **LEICESTER MORRISMEN** in 2012

Correct as at 11 November 2011

Subject to addition and amendment

All times are approximate!

## Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2011 (Border Morris)

7.00 pm Market Harborough Town Centre

## Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2011 (Border Morris)

7.00 pm Leicester City Centre

## Monday 26<sup>th</sup> December 2011 (Border Morris)

12.00 noon Swithland The Griffin Inn

## Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2012 (Border Morris)

12.00 noon Markfield The Queen's Head  
 12.45 pm Markfield The Red Lion  
 1.30 pm Markfield The Church  
 2.00 pm Markfield Croftway  
 2.20 pm Markfield The Bull's Head

## Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> January (Border Morris)

*As Guests of the Whittlesea Society*

All day Whittlesea Straw Bear Festival

## Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> May

7.00 am Bradgate Park Old John

## Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> May

7.45 pm Leicester Knighton Corner  
 (formerly Flynn's)  
 8.30 pm Leicester The Donkey

## Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> May

7.45 pm Hoby The Blue Bell  
 8.30 pm Frisby-on-the-Wreake The Bell

## Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May

7.45 pm Sapcote The Red Lion  
 8.30 pm Stoney Stanton The Blue Bell

## Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> May

afternoon Donington-le-Heath Manor House

## Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> May

7.45 pm Keyham The Dog & Gun  
 8.30 pm Scraftoft The White House

## Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> May

7.45 pm Abbots Oak The Bull's Head  
 8.30 pm Whitwick The Three Horseshoes  
 (Polly's)  
 9.15 pm Thringstone The George & Dragon



## Friday 1<sup>st</sup> June - Monday 4<sup>th</sup> June

*As Guests of Leeds Morrismen*

Yorkshire Dales  
 Leeds Morrismen Diamond Jubilee Tour

## Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> June

7.45 pm Leicester The Almanack  
 8.30 pm Leicester The Criterion  
 9.15 pm Leicester The Swan & Rushes

## Friday 8<sup>th</sup> June - Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> June

*As Guests of the Forest of Dean Morrismen*

The 41<sup>st</sup> Forest of Dean Festival of Morris Dancing

## Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> June (Cotswold Morris)

7.45 pm Weston-by-Welland The Wheel & Compass  
 8.30 pm Welham The Red Lion  
 9.15 pm Glooston The Old Barn

## Monday 18<sup>th</sup> June

*As Guests of Man Friday Morrismen*

8.00 pm Thrussington Village Green

## Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> June

7.45 pm Syston The Gate Hangs Well  
 8.30 pm Rothley The Royal Oak  
 9.15 pm Mountsorrel The Swan Inn

## Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> June

7.45 pm Wigston The 1852  
 8.30 pm Wigston The Bell Fountain  
 9.15 pm Wigston The Star & Garter

## Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June

Stratford-on-Avon: National Morris Event

## Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July

7.45 pm Cadeby Village  
 8.30 pm Barlestone The Three Tuns  
 9.15 pm Newbold Verdon The Jubilee

## Friday 6<sup>th</sup> July - Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> July

*As Guests of the Lobster Potties*

Sheringham: The 19<sup>th</sup> Potty Morris & Folk Festival

## Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> July

7.45 pm Countesthorpe The King William IV  
 8.30 pm Dunton Bassett Dunton Bassett Arms

## Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> July

7.45 pm Hemington The Jolly Sailor  
 8.30 pm Cavendish Bridge The Old Crown

## Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> July

7.45 pm Enderby The New Inn  
 8.30 pm Huncote The Red Lion

## Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> August

7.45 pm Walton-on-the-Wolds The Anchor  
 8.30 pm Wymeswold The Windmill

## Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> August

7.45 pm Smeeton Westerby The King's Arms  
 8.30 pm Fleckney The Golden Shield

## Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> August

7.45 pm Thurmaston The Harrow  
 8.30 pm Birstall The Old Plough

## Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> August

7.45 pm Leicester The Globe  
 8.30 pm Leicester The Slug & Lettuce  
 9.15 pm Leicester The Pub

## Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> September

1.00 pm Gumley The Bell  
 2.00 pm Foxton Foxton Locks Inn

## Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> December (Border Morris)

12.00 noon Swithland The Griffin Inn

## Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> January 2013 (Border Morris)

12.00 noon Markfield Annual Village Tour

[www.leicestermorrismen.co.uk](http://www.leicestermorrismen.co.uk)

Photo Credits:  
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