

STAPLERS

NEWSLETTER

www.staplers.org.uk

July 2012

Notes from the Chairman

Despite the poor weather so far this summer the Club has still been busy, outside as well as inside. Pirton Village May Festival had a rather wet start but it stopped raining long enough to enable a dozen Staplers to encourage the crowd to join them and dance, to music from Derek and Chris and calling from Joan Rutt. Torrential rain all day meant we had to cancel dancing round Pirton Maypole in June but we regrouped at St John's for a typical idiosyncratic evening from Chris Turner with lovely music from Cloudburst. July 9th stayed dry all day and evening so we were able to meet as planned at the Red Lion in Preston, to dance and then chat over food prepared by the pub. The venue, food, dance selection from Nick and music from Derek, Chris and Rachel (newly returned from Texas) all received a good press so this looks likely to become another regular in our calendar. In addition, on a couple of Saturdays some Staplers in club costume have given displays in Hitchin market place to publicise the existence of the club. I hope we are lucky with the

weather for the garden evenings. As always thank you everyone who has offered the use of your garden. Once again, we shall be collecting a £1 sub at the garden evenings; don't forget your chair and as last year, in order to make the most of the light, the garden evenings will start at 7 o'clock. Apart from the first one, at Joan and Chris's, which will transfer to the Methodist Church Hall if wet, please check in advance with the hosts if the weather is uncertain.

I wish you a very happy summer and welcome you back to St John's on 3rd September.

Ann Gibson

Notice of the AGM

Come along to the **AGM** on 1st October 2012 and support your hard-working committee.

Committee

Chairman: Ann Gibson
Secretary: Ces Mills
Treasurer: David Millman
Editor: Cedric Morgan

Committee Members:

Kim Brosan;
Leslie Elliott;
Denise Devonald;
Hazel Glass;
Lorraine Morgan

EVENTS

Club Evening with 'Pace Egging Play' • 2nd April 2012

"Nervous actors, but fun, we booed and clapped in all the right places and were rewarded with tiny Easter Eggs!" — So I noted in my journal after a busy weekend. I had never heard of the Pace Egg Play until the Staplers Club Night, but 'Googled' to research:

The word 'Pace' comes from the old English word 'pasch' literally meaning 'Easter'. The Pace Egg Plays are a tradition that was once widespread throughout England, but is now only practiced in a few areas. Many plays died out after the Great War, when the men who took part in them were killed in action.

The Pace Egg Plays, which take place around Easter, are traditional village plays, with a rebirth theme, in which St George smites all challengers with his sword, and the fool, Old Toss Pot, rejoices. The drama takes the form of a violent combat between the hero and villain, in which the hero is killed and brought to life, often by a doctor. As ever, good triumphs over evil!

Halfway through the dance evening we formed our chairs into a semicircle and Ann introduced her 'Company of Mummers', who entered individually, (some with great suddenness!), and spoke their pieces, hornpiped, sung the Pace Egg Song, had fierce fights (laughter, cheers and boos!), and all ended hale and hearty!

To finish we were handed round baskets of eggs. Is there a better life - dancing and

chocolate in one evening!



This was the first occasion that Staplers had put on this play - I really hope it won't be the last; they deserve a wider and younger audience – I'm preaching to the converted here!

Anne Dickens

*Can you believe,
we even practiced*



The Battle!

The End



The Cast



EVENTS

St George's Day at Staplers • 23rd April 2012

Bridget was our caller on this special day. She had decreed that we should all wear a red rose or red and white in honour of the Saint, so we were a colourful crew.

Bridget's programme consisted of all English dances – most named for a County or Town, and Hazel had made a lovely map, and a rose was placed at the relevant point as we did each dance.

The dances were all those I had learnt in the heady days of my youth – although they seemed to be faster than I remembered – but it was a great joy to me to dance them all again – and everyone else seemed to particularly enjoy the lively evening.

Please, please, please, do it again Bridget!!!!

The dances were:

Devon Bonny Breast Knot, Somerset Bonny Breast Knot, Dorset Triumph, Haste to the Wedding (Surrey/Devon), Wiltshire Tempest, Steamboat, Nottingham Swing, Norfolk Long Dance, Yorkshire Square, Morpeth Rant, Pins & Needles, Shrewsbury Lasses.

Margaret Rollason

Prompted by Bridget's letter in a previous Newsletter, I had borrowed an 'England' football shirt from my neighbour, wore a red and white elasticated hairband round my arm and Alan wore a white shirt with a red bow tie. Most people had found red and white items from their wardrobes – a very colourful whirl of dancers! The table at the back of the hall was decorated with a red and white table cloth, an embroidered Tudor Rose, and a glass vase holding two red roses. England flags were in abundance. There was a St George quiz sheet too (we knew nothing!)

Hazel had made a large map of England and Wales (the latter having a token daffodil in its centre). As we danced each dance, a paper rose was placed over the place from which it came – and it looked really effective. (e.g. Nottingham Swing, Morpeth Rant) – we danced our way round the country.

Bridget had also provided scones and parkin for tea break, and Ian read Joyce Grenfell's 'Stately As A Galleon'.

I must say that Staplers is an imaginative club! It was a lovely evening.

Anne Dickens

EVENTS

Dance Display for Fairtrade Day • 12th May 2012

Ten plus dancers under Bridget's guidance, gave an excellent display of country dancing for the best part of ¾ hour. The crowd of mixed ages showed their appreciation and got the chance to join in a circle dance at the end of well chosen programme.

Luckily the weather was kind this year and supporting events like this can only spread the good name of the Staplers even further.

Steve and Clare Russell



'Shrewsbury Lassess' in the Market Square, Hitchin



In recent years, Staplers have increasingly had the pleasure of dancing displays mainly in old folks homes, lunch clubs and for various functions in Hitchin's Market Square where we always get a good reception.

The photos here are from the Fairtrade Day and the 'Go Hitchin' event at the time of the Olympic Torch passing through the area.



*Ron and Sarah polka across
in Yorkshire Square Eight*

*A photo opportunity for
the display team*



EVENTS

Barbecue at The Red Lion • 9th July 2012

Considering the exceedingly variable weather conditions during the weeks preceding our Barbecue in the grounds of the Red Lion, Preston, the 40+ dancers who attended the event displayed a particularly high level of optimism, and were not disappointed. The occasion, although not bathed in the mellow evening sunshine one might expect in early July, remained dry.

Members who arrived early quickly rearranged a number of the pub's tables to provide a (fairly !!) flat area on which to dance, while the band and caller, Nick Plum set up their equipment, music stands, etc. on one side of the patio. In the midst of all this preparation the landlord set up his barbecue on the opposite side of the patio.

The steady arrival of more dancers prompted much good natured greeting

and friendly banter, to such an extent that one non-dancing visitor to the pub asked if she had accidentally stumbled into a "speed dating" event.

Promptly at 7.30pm Nick called on dancers to abandon their drinks and form up in sets of 3 couples for the first dance – *The Black Nag*. Prior to the customary 'walk through' Nick took the opportunity to introduce 'The Preston Ephemeral Folk Trio' our band for the evening (better known as Derek Boothby, Chris Rutt, & Rachel Auld). The evening progressed in light hearted vein as Nick worked through his programme of mainly well known dances, including *The Spaniard*, *Childgrove* and *Newcastle*, until finally bringing his programme to a close just before 9.00pm with the ever popular duo of *Sun Assembly* and *Devil's Dream*.

Clearly, the energetic dancing prompted by our musicians had generated a healthy appetite in most dancers and a long queue quickly formed by the barbecue to purchase the landlord's locally sourced sausages in warm, slightly crusty baps (which were delicious !!)

General socialising, chatting and chomping continued until lack of light prompted a general exodus – bringing a very successful evening to a close.

Many thanks to committee, band, and caller for a job well done.

Graham Styles

Our caller, Nick Plum





The Preston Ephemerals



Lead up 'a double' and fall back

EVENTS

Barbecue at The Red Lion • 9th July 2012



*Artistic shot (?) of dancers in the garden of the Red Lion –
or are they all searching for worms?*

EDITORIAL

This bumper edition is the first time that the newsletter has made 12 pages. I have had a lot of write-ups for the various events as well as some good photographs, so it seemed a shame to exclude anything. Those of you who still have a paper version, I would urge you to at least have a look at the email version which is in glorious colour and is especially good for the photos. If Lorraine does not have your email, let her know.

Over the summer, we will be in various members' gardens and during the Autumn, there are the usual two 'Saturday' dances as well as a workshop on the dances of Gary Roodman. This continues our series of workshops on a variety of topics held over the past few years and promises to be extremely popular.

This edition also takes our weekly events up to the Christmas Party, so can I be the first - and this well may be a record - to wish you all Seasons Greetings!

Ced the Ed

GARDEN EVENINGS

Date	Venue	Caller
Monday 30 July 7.00pm		Lorraine Morgan
Monday 6 August 7.00pm		Cedric Morgan
Friday 10 August		'Come all ye' <i>Callers bring your own recorded music</i>
Monday 13 August 7.00pm		Bridget McRury
Monday 20 August 7.00pm		Terry Elvins

Don't forget your chairs, mozzie repellent and the fact that it's a 7.00 start for the Staplers' events and 7.30 for Fine Companions on 10 August.

FUTURE EVENTS

Anniversary Dance • 6th October 2012

Mark Elvins with Stick Shift

Christmas Dance • 1st December 2012

Ron Coxall with Stradivarious

Both Dances at: St Ippolyts Parish Hall, Hitchin SG4 7RA

7.30 – 11.00 • £8 - on the door

MONDAY NIGHT CALLERS

5 September	Bernard Higgs	29 October	Wendy Harrup with <i>Derek and Chris</i>
10 September	Lorraine Morgan	5 November	Ced Morgan
17 September	Jill Bransby with <i>Derek, Chris & Rachel</i>	12 November	Bridget McRury & Barbara Gilder
24 September	Paul Garner	19 November	Colin Hume with <i>Spring Greens</i>
1 October	AGM @ 8.30pm. <i>Dancing from 8.00pm & after the AGM with Bridget McRury</i>	26 November	Adam Hughes
8 October	Adrian Besant	3 December	Nick Plum
15 October	Joan Rutt	10 December	Ann Gibson
22 October	Terry Elvins	17 December	Christmas Party – Club callers & <i>Seasonal Surprises</i>

FUTURE EVENTS

Workshop: 'Dances of Gary Roodman'

led by **John Turner** with music from **Paul Hutchinson**

Gary Roodman is a retired college professor who taught Statistics and Applied Mathematics. His background in that kind of problem solving has probably influenced the way he goes about writing dances. He starts with the tune - in many cases well-known 'classical pieces', he then finds elegant solutions (in a mathematical sense) to interesting dance puzzles – sequences of figures that are logical, economical, easy to follow, and that obscure the underlying complexities.

He says: "After dancers have learned one of my dances, I would like the flow of the dance to seem as inevitable as the flow of the music, with little need to concentrate on what comes next."

He now has a vast collection of very flowing, popular and interesting dances some of which will be explored in this workshop.

St Ippolyts Parish Hall • 4th November – 2.00 - 5.00pm • £7