

THE MAYFLOWER MORRIS MEN

An Evening With

ST. GEORGE AND FRIENDS



∞ A CELEBRATION OF ENGLISH SONG, DANCE ∞
POETRY, PROSE, MUSIC AND DRAMA

St. Mary Magdalen, High Street, Billericay
8-10.30 p.m. 21st April 2012

The Story of Rindercella

Ken Smith & Julian Whybra

Other languages just don't have spoonerisms. In English the word-play works supremely well, as in this short skit.

Two Pieces for Clarinet and Viola

Claire Morley & Susan Morley

Claire and Susan have arranged two pieces for clarinet and viola. The first is the English composer Charles Parry's *Jerusalem* written in 1916. The second is *Hornpipe* from *A Miscellany for Clarinet* written in 1990 by Michael Rose (born 1934). Michael Rose's career in composing and conducting has involved him in music teaching, in education advisory work, in training a BBC orchestra, and in developing youth orchestras and operas.

Historical Morris Moment No. 1: William Kemp's Nine Daies Wonder

Geoff Douglas

Will Kemp was Shakespeare's chief comedy actor and played Falstaff, Bottom, and many other famous rôles. He was also a famous Morris dancer. Following a disagreement with Shakespeare, Kemp left the company and in 1600 decided for a bet to dance from London to Norwich in nine days. When he finished, he wrote a book of his experiences along the way called the *Nine Daies Wonder*...

Idbury Hill (Bledington, Glos) and Shepherds' Hey (Ravensthorpe, Northants)

Mayflower Morris Men

The first dance, *Idbury Hill*, comes from the village of Bledington. Four dancers and a musician, all in their eighties and nineties, were still alive when this village's dances were collected by the folk-song and -dance collector Cecil Sharp in 1906. The dance is very graceful and the music sounds positively mediaeval (probably because it is!).

Although almost all Morris dances were recorded in the early years of the 20th century, a few slipped through the net. A manuscript for two long-stick dances from Ravensthorpe was discovered in 2006 by Barry Care. The musical notation for one of them, *Shepherds' Hey*, was eventually discovered among the papers of Percy Grainger in Sydney! The Mayflower Morris Men learnt both dances in early 2007 and are thus only the second side in the country to perform them. The intermittent sticking in this dance is the devil to remember.



Thomas Hardy: Under the Greenwood Tree Julian Whybra, The Choir for All Seasons, and Chloe Reynolds

Hardy's sunniest work, *Under the Greenwood Tree* published in 1872, is also the first in his great series of Wessex novels. Two newcomers settle in the village of Mellstock bringing change and disruption to its rural inhabitants. One of them, Miss Fancy Day, a schoolteacher and a flower among vegetables, has an upsetting effect upon the hearts of its young men... . It's late on Christmas Eve and the village choir is about to set off to make the rounds of the village to sing Christmas in...

(The carol which Hardy uses is the beautiful but soulful *Remember, O thou man*, from *Melismata*, written by Thomas Ravenscroft)



Two Songs by John Bennet and Henry Purcell The Choir for All Seasons

The first song is *All creatures now are merry minded* by John Bennet (c.1575-c.1620) comes from *The Triumphs of Oriana*, a collection dated 1601 by various composers in honour of Queen Elizabeth I. The little gem, *Thou knowest, Lord, the secrets of our hearts* by Henry Purcell (1659-95) is part of his *Music for the Funeral of Queen Mary*, written 1694-5. It made such an impression that it was included in his own funeral service eight months later.

The Choir for All Seasons, is a popular local small chamber choir of mixed voices that performs short pieces of music from practically every era and genre of music and has been in existence for over 30 years. They are always on the lookout for new voices!

William Shakespeare: Sonnet 18 Chris Saunders

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day is one of the best-known of Shakespeare's Sonnets published in 1609. The speaker compares his beloved to the summer and argues that his beloved is better and that she will live on forever through the words of the poem whereas the beauty of a summer's day always fades eventually.

English Pipe Music

Mike Oxenham

Mayflower's pipe and tabor player, Mike Oxenham, is a member of St. George's Canzona whose early music recordings are well-known. His first piece, *Royal Estampie* (anon. 14th c.), is the eighth of at least twelve estampies which were performed on any instrument by minstrels who travelled round Europe's Courts. Then there's a brief exposé of tunes played on the three-holed pipe, an interesting instrument found only in three places in Europe. His last piece, *Staten Island* (anon.), is one of the standards from the folk-tune repertoire and is always a favourite at barn dances. The name may stem from Staten Island, New York where British soldiers were always landed or from Staten Island off Cape Horn – if you could see the island then you'd have a storm-free passage round the Cape!



William Kemp, the Morris dancer, and Thomas Sly, the pipe and taborer, from the title page of the *Nine Dates Wander*

The Rochester Recruiting Sergeant

Tony Motley

This song, originally entitled *The Bold Fusilier*, can be dated by its reference to the Duke of Marlborough and the Wars of the Spanish Succession (1701-14). In the 1890s A. B. 'Banjo' Patterson put new words to the tune and his version became very popular in another country (you'll know where when you hear the song). In the 1970s Gregg Butler, Malcolm Gibbons and Chris Pollington added some verses to the original song to create the version you'll hear this evening. Please sing along with the chorus!

*Who'll be a soldier, who'll be a soldier,
Who'll be a soldier for Marlborough and me?
And he sang, as he marched,
And he played upon his kettle drum,
"Who'll be a soldier for Marlborough and me?"*

INTERVAL OF 30 MINUTES:

Refreshments c/o The Royal Society of St. George accompanied by the tuneful sounds of Paddy Beadle's accordion.

Jubilee Roundabout

St. George and the Trombone

This medley of English folk tunes and songs is in honour of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and is based on *Byker Hill* from Northumberland, *The Lincolnshire Poacher* from Lincolnshire, *I'm Seventeen Come Sunday* from Somerset, and *The Helston Furry Dance* from Cornwall. The St. George and the Trombone ceilidh band performs throughout the mid-Essex area. If you'd like a barn dance, have a quiet word with them!

If I Ruled the World

Tony Motley

This song was composed by Leslie Bricusse and Cyril Ornadel for the 1963 West End musical *Pickwick* based on Charles Dickens's *The Pickwick Papers*. In the musical it is sung by Samuel Pickwick himself when he is mistaken for an election candidate and called upon by the crowd to give his manifesto. It is of course always associated with Harry Secombe.

Historical Morris Moment No. 2: Cecil Sharp discovers Morris Dancing

Ken Smith

On Boxing Day 1899 Cecil Sharp heard music in the street outside the house where he was staying and saw Morris dancers for the first time. They were the Headington Quarry Morris Men and the subsequent conversations with the side's musician, William Kimber, changed Sharp's life forever...

Rodney (Headington, Oxon) and Room for the Cuckolds (Bucknell, Oxon)
Mayflower Morris Men

The first dance, *Rodney*, comes from William Kimber's village of Headington in Oxfordshire, one of four English villages where Morris has been performed on Whit Monday in an unbroken chain from time immemorial. The side hates doing this dance as will be explained...

The second dance, *Room for the Cuckolds* from Bucknell also in Oxfordshire, has to have absolutely precise timing in the heys (otherwise the dancers collide) and the choruses are fast and furious.



Morris Dancers photographed in 1875. Bucknell

Fields of Gold

Chloe Reynolds

This song was composed in 1993 by Gordon Sumner (alias Sting) after he bought a house near a barley field. It appeared in the album 'Ten Summoner's Tales' the title of which is a play on his surname and a reference to The Canterbury Tales, which like the album, tells many different tales.

'Woodbine Willie': The Spirit

Tony Motley

Geoffrey Anketell Studdert Kennedy (1883-1929) was an Anglican priest and poet. He was nicknamed 'Woodbine Willie' for giving Woodbine cigarettes along with spiritual aid to dying and wounded soldiers in the First World War. He volunteered in 1914 as an army chaplain and won the Military Cross in 1917 for running into No Man's Land to help the wounded during an attack on Messines Ridge. He wrote two books of poetry about his wartime experiences. *The Spirit* appeared in *Rough Rhymes of a Padre* published in 1918. After the war he became famous for his anti-capitalist tirades.

Raving Ron the Pteranodon

Claire Morley & Susan Morley

This piece, arranged by Susan and Claire for clarinet and viola, comes from *Dancing Dinosaurs* by Colin Cowles (born 1940) who mainly composes orchestral and choral works.

Two Songs by William Boyce and Peter Maxwell Davies

The Choir for All Seasons

The first song, *Alleluia*, is a three-part round by William Boyce (1710-19). He is best known for his church music and eight symphonies – we just happen to have this bright little round in our choir library! The second song, *Lullaby for Lucy*, is by Peter Maxwell Davies (born 1934), the current Master of the Queen's Music. He was the *enfant terrible* of English music in the 1960s and 70s, renowned for writing tough music, tough to perform and tough to listen to, but here he is an exception. He has lived on the island of Hoy in the Orkneys since 1970 and has often been inspired by the local landscape and people.

Hilaire Belloc: Sarah Byng, Who Could Not Read and Was Tossed Into a Thorny Hedge by a Bull

Julian Whybra

Hilaire Belloc (1870-1953) was born in France to an English mother and French father. He was brought up and educated in England and became a naturalized British subject. He became an historian, M.P., and writer, particularly of poetry. His most lasting legacy is his 'cautionary tales' of which *Sarah Byng...* is one of the best-remembered.

Medley of English Folk Tunes

Paul McCann

Paul McCann, accomplished on the concertina, accordion, and melodeon, is well-known in Essex folk circles and he runs the Margaretting Folk club which meets on the second Thursday of each month at The White Hart, Margaretting Tye. He'll be playing two Suffolk tunes on the melodeon, *Wait for the Waggon* and *Dennington Bell*, a traditional Essex dance tune called *Epping Forest* on duet concertina, and, on the same instrument, two pieces from Yorkshire player Kit White entitled *Kit White's No. 1* and *Kit White's No. 2*.

I Vow to Thee, My Country

Kerry Cooke

In 1921 the composer, Gustav Holst, used the words from a poem written in 1918 by Cecil Spring-Rice, as the lyrics for a hymn which was to become a great English patriotic song. Spring-Rice's original poem of 1908 (*Urbs Dei* or *The Two Fatherlands*) described a Christian's twin loyalties to his homeland and the Kingdom of Heaven. The altered and re-named 1918 version of his poem refers to England and its huge sacrifice in the First World War. It is likely that Holst was influenced in his choice of lyrics by his daughter who had attended the same school, St Paul's Girls' School in London, as Spring-Rice's daughter. The first verse has a heated patriotism in keeping with the time:

*I vow to thee, my country, all earthly things above,
Entire and whole and perfect, the service of my love;
The love that asks no question, the love that stands the test,
That lays upon the altar the dearest and the best;
The love that never falters, the love that pays the price,
The love that makes undaunted the final sacrifice.*

The second verse is no longer considered suitable for modern use, not included in hymn books, and is never heard. So, for your information only, here are the words...

*I heard my country calling, away across the sea,
Across the waste of waters she calls and calls to me.
Her sword is girded at her side, her helmet on her head,
And round her feet are lying the dying and the dead.
I hear the noise of battle, the thunder of her guns,
I haste to thee my mother, a son among thy sons.*

The first line of the third verse refers to heaven, and the final line is based on Proverbs 3:17:

*And there's another country, I've heard of long ago,
Most dear to them that love her, most great to them that know;
We may not count her armies, we may not see her King;
Her fortress is a faithful heart, her pride is suffering;
And soul by soul and silently her shining bounds increase,
And her ways are ways of gentleness, and all her paths are peace.*

Holst took the music from a section of *Jupiter* from *The Planets Suite* (1914-16) to create the hymn with the music extended slightly to fit the final two lines of each verse. In hymnals, this melody is usually referred to as *Phaetor* (named after the village where Holst lived for many years). The hymn was first performed in 1925 and became a common element at Armistice Day memorial ceremonies.

MAYFLOWER MORRIS MEN were formed in 1973 to bring the Morris in all its forms back to Billericay.... BUT... we DO urgently need new members... If you're male, aged 8 to 80, and enjoy showing off, come and join us. Contact our Bagman Geoff Douglas on 01245 345922.