



## The Chingford Morrismen

Our own tradition is less ancient. The Chingford Morrismen first danced out in 1962. The side originated at Chingford School by one of the teachers, Peter Boyce. Our own dances began to be developed soon after that, and we perform these almost exclusively. They are in the Cotswold style - six dancers to a set, using wooden sticks or handkerchiefs.

In addition to the dancers, you may see two further characters: The Fool, who adds an element of fun and encourages audience participation, whilst the ram "Goldenballs" is our symbolic beast, personifying the fertility aspect of the dance.

We also perform mixed clog dances from the north-west of England. These are based on dances from Gala Days and Rushbearing ceremonies in the cotton-mill towns, where clogs were worn for work.

The Chingford dancers can be recognised by the colours of red, yellow and green. Our badge is adapted from the old Chingford Borough arms, with elements representing Epping Forest, the "mighty" River Ching, and the county of Essex.

The majority of our performances take place during the summer, at public houses, fetes and festivals. We are also to be seen at other times, notably every Boxing Day - where you can

## The roots of Morris dancing

Since prehistoric times, dancing has played a significant role in those rituals designed to celebrate the rebirth of spring and ensure the fertility of flock and field. We like to think that English Morris dancing has its roots in such pagan practices, though the earliest documentary evidence dates back only to the time of the first Tudor kings. The origin of the word "Morris" is subject to debate. There is an 11th century church with a depiction of what is thought to be a Morris dancer.

The earliest written reference to Morris dancing is 19<sup>th</sup> May 1448, Goldsmiths Company, London.

During later centuries, the Morris became an integral part of the seasonal round, with many villages, especially in the Cotswolds, having their own side with its unique tradition. By the end of the 19th century, however, the custom had largely died out and been forgotten.

The present revival may be traced back to when collectors such as Cecil Sharp were inspired to gather information from surviving dancers and musicians. Their work forms the basis of much of the dancing seen today. Some teams, such as Bampton, in Oxfordshire, have a tradition unbroken for centuries.

experience an original and topical "Mummers" play in Waltham Abbey,

## How you can help

You may participate in this tradition and ensure your own good luck by contributing to our collecting tin.

We hope that you enjoy watching us, and if you would like to know more about "Morris", or would like to see us again, please contact our "Bagman" [chingford.morris@gmail.com](mailto:chingford.morris@gmail.com)

We especially welcome new musicians and dancers, whether experienced or beginner, to help us to keep this unique English tradition alive.

We currently practice in Waltham Abbey Community Centre from September to March at 8pm on a Monday evening. We practice outside when the weather is suitable. Please ring 01992 712765 for details.

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If you are interested in joining in please pass on your contact details to any member of the team.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Where to see us in 2024

These are where and when we expect to dance.

Some may change, so do please check before travelling.

For the latest information please see our website:

<http://chingfordmorris.org.uk> or find us on Facebook.

### **Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April, Chingford**

The Kings Head, 8:30pm

### **Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April, St. George's Day**

The George, Woodford 8.00 pm

The Angel, Waltham Abbey 9.15 pm

### **Wednesday 1st May, May Day**

Warren Wood, 8.00 pm

Woodbine, 8.45 pm

### **Monday 13th May, Waltham Abbey**

The Queen's Head, 9 pm

### **Monday 20th May, Kelvedon Hatch**

The Eagle, 8.30 pm

### **Monday 3rd June, Epping**

The Forest Gate, 8.30 pm

### **Monday 10th June, Wanstead**

The Nightingale on the Green, 8.30 pm

### **Monday 17th June, Woodford Bridge**

Crown and Crooked Billet, 8.30 pm

### **Monday 24<sup>th</sup> June, Theydon**

Theydon Oak, 8:30pm

### **Saturday 29th June, Waltham Abbey**

Town Show, Town Mead, 2.45 pm

### **Monday 8th July, Walthamstow**

Ye Olde Rose and Crown, 8.30 pm

### **Monday 15th July, Chingford**

The Larkshall 8.30pm

### **Monday 22nd July, Waltham Abbey**

The Market Square ,8.30pm

### **Monday 29th July, Loughton**

The Victoria, 8:30pm

### **Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> August, Germany**

Castellans Folk Festival

### **13<sup>th</sup> October, Copped Hall. Apple Day**

Time to be confirmed

### **Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> December, Boxing Day**

#### **Tour, Waltham Abbey**

The Angel, 12 noon

The Market Square, 12.45 pm

The Woodbine, 1.45 pm

CONTACT: - The Bagman (Club Secretary)

[chingford.morris@gmail.com](mailto:chingford.morris@gmail.com)

01992 712765



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