



Lymm. Morris Dancers. No. 1815.

THE LYMM MORRIS DANCE AND DANCERS

In 1817, Lymm Morris Dancers danced at the Lymm Rushbearing celebrations.

Each Rushbearing Saturday, the Lymm Morris Dancers turned out to dance. Even when rushbearing was dying out, the Morris Dancers were still there as reported in the Warrington Guardian in 1910

"The ancient glory of Rushbearing dies hard. As in years passed the Morris dancers perambulated the village on Rushbearing Saturday in their gaudy dress to the huge delight of children and visitors."

This continued up to WW1, and it was reported in The Examiner in 1915 that...

"...morris dances always played a prominent part in the festivities... ..and these dances, if nothing else, have always been kept up until this year, having now been abandoned owing to the war (as all the dancers are at the Front, even "the old 'woman' with the spoon and bell),"

That seemed to be that, until 1920 when, at Statham Festival, a boys team performed, led by Ned Rowles, one of the original dancers.

This revival was short lived, and by the end of the 20's a more popular style of Morris Dancing became popular and took over – the style similar to modern "Carnival" morris.

The "Old Dance" was lost until the late 1970s, when Geoff Bibby, an enthusiastic Thelwall Morris Man, knew of the dance and decided to revive it. To cut a longer story short, he looked at brief notes on the dance, obtained a photo of the 1923 boys team, traced those still living, picked their brains and put together a version of the dance.

This unique dance was debuted in 1980 and performed regularly by Thelwall Morris Men. In 1986, the Lymm Morris Dancers were reborn and performed the revived "Lymm Dance" at Lymm Rushbearing in replica kit as worn by the old team. The Dance is also performed at other traditional Lymm events, May Queen and Dickensian Day.

Now the bad news.

Lymm Morris Dancers are declining in numbers and may no longer be able to dance "The Lymm Dance" and it will be lost again. This is due mainly to Thelwall Morris Men, who make up the greater part of Lymm Morris, and they are also declining in numbers - formed in 1973 and struggling to make it to their 50th Anniversary.

To keep one, or better still both, of your local Morris Dancing teams and the unique local dance, have a good think about joining us. You may feel unfit now, but a few sessions will improve your fitness. Have a look at our websites (lymm-morris.org.uk and/or thelwallmorris.org.uk) then "contact us" if interested or require more information.