

MORRIS DANCING



THE 48TH TOUR OF
THE AMERICAN
TRAVELLING MORRICE
JULY 27TH TO AUGUST 2ND, 2025

Morris dancing is an old English country tradition. Its origin and why it is called 'Morris' are long forgotten, but there are written and pictorial references to it from the 15th century. Shakespeare cherished the Morris and made allusions to it in many of his plays.

The Morris flourished in the 17th and 18th centuries, surviving flood, famine, war, plague, and Oliver Cromwell. Hundreds of villages throughout England supported Morris teams or 'sides', and the dancers often competed for prizes at country fairs.

The Industrial Revolution, however, brought social changes that eroded the basis of village folklife. Young people left the farm villages to work in urban factories. As the rural population declined, the number of Morris teams shrank until only a handful remained active.

Happily, in 1899, a chance meeting sparked a rebirth of interest in the Morris. On Boxing Day (December 26th) of that year, the Headington Quarry Morris Men, accompanied by their concertina player William Kimber, danced at a cottage near the city of Oxford. Cecil Sharp, an ethnomusicologist, classical musician, and composer, saw that performance and was intrigued. Sharp invited Kimber to return the next day so that he could notate the tunes. Thus began a collaboration that resulted in a remarkably successful Morris revival.

Sharp and others traveled throughout England and collected the old music and dances from musicians and dancers like Kimber. They published the notations and urged folk clubs and schools to teach Morris dancing. Today there are hundreds of sides dancing in England, and over 200 teams have sprung up in North America over the past 50 years.

The American Travelling Morrice was originally composed of dancers and musicians from Binghamton, NY and Boston, MA.

Over the years, dancers from other communities have joined, including some from England. Many of us perform regularly with teams in our hometowns, and we also come together for one week each year to form the American Travelling Morrice. Since 1976, our group has toured throughout New England and New York. We have also visited Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and California. We have danced at the Baseball Hall of Fame, the Newport Folk Festival, the House of the Seven Gables, and outside of the White House in Washington, DC. In 2006, 2013, and 2018 the tour returned to its English roots, dancing in the Cotswolds, the Lake District, and Yorkshire in the UK.

We dance the Morris because we enjoy it, and we find that people enjoy watching it. The Morris shares strongly in the world of the village green, the marketplace, and the pub. In the old days, it was often said that the Morris brought good luck and prosperity to the communities in which it was danced. We hope that we have brought this to your community.

For more information, visit our website at <http://atmorris.org>.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Thank you to everyone who assisted us with this event. We are especially grateful for help from Glenda Neff, Frank Ireland, Jeanie Welch, John Bromka, Sondra Bromka, Sofia Gutierrez, Courtney Kasper, Liam Sherwood, Megan Ball, and Charlie Bisnett.

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WHERE TO SEE THE DANCERS...

SUNDAY 7/27—

- 11:30AM** Syracuse, NY: Shot Clock Plaza,
Franklin & Jefferson Streets
- 1:00PM** Syracuse, NY: Art in the Atrium
- 3:00PM** Syracuse, NY: Perseverance Park
- 5:30PM** Pompey, NY: Heritage Hill Brewhouse

MONDAY 7/28—

- 3:45PM** Baldwinsville, NY: Baldwinsville Public Library
- 6:15PM** Liverpool, NY: Johnson Park

TUESDAY 7/29—

- 11:00AM** Syracuse, NY: Thornden Park—Rose Garden
- 2:30PM** Syracuse, NY: Leavenworth Park
- 4:30PM** Liverpool, NY: Onondaga Lake Park—Visitor Center
- 5:15PM** Liverpool, NY: Onondaga Lake Park—Salt Museum

THURSDAY 7/31—

- 10:30AM** Fayetteville, NY: Fayetteville Center for Active Adults
- 11:30AM** Chittenango, NY: Chittenango Landing Canal Museum
- 3:00PM** Fayetteville, NY: Fayetteville Farmers Market
- 6:00PM** Marcellus, NY: Marcellus Park—near the Annex
- 7:00PM** Skaneateles, NY: Skan Ellus Drive-In
(Performing with the Bassett Street Hounds & Thornden Morris)

FRIDAY 8/1—

- 10:30AM** Marcellus, NY: Baltimore Woods Nature Center
- 6:00PM** Auburn, NY: NYS Equal Rights Heritage Center
- 6:45PM** Auburn, NY: State Street Event Plaza

SATURDAY 8/2—

- 11:00AM** Homer, NY: Homer NY Regional Farmers' Market
- 12:00PM** Cortland, NY: Court Street (Arts Off Main Festival)
- 2:30PM** Jamesville, NY: Jamesville Beach Park
- 4:00PM** Marietta, NY: Lakeside Vista Restaurant & Tavern
- 5:30PM** Marietta, NY: Amber Inn Tavern

This schedule is tentative. Please see our website for the latest updated version: <http://atmorris.org>.