

DOLPHIN MORRIS.

REPORT FROM THE JOINT SQUIRES FOR THE 2019 AGM

This has been the first time in Dolphin's long history that there has been more than one Squire at a time, and the first job-share for any role. Neither of the proposed candidates felt they could give 100% to the role because of commitments outside of Dolphin, hence the job-share suggestion. I hope the team feels it has been a successful move.

There has been much discussion over the past few years (and last year was no exception) about the continued health of both the team and the team members, and the best ways to keep the side strong. Several of us are struggling with worn-out body parts, while others are enjoying retirement to the full with time for other hobbies – and some have moved away from the area. For some, it's all three! Some good work has been done to try to reduce the impact of this on the side. Martin's hard graft with TeamStuff was intended to ensure we knew if we would be short-handed, but has probably encouraged some of us to turn up to make up the numbers. Some of the non-dancing (or non-morris) activities – the Bradmore Play and the Dancing Butchers - have been fun and have given the team additional strings to our bow. Thanks to Bob and Ray for driving those forward. With Mike's Plough Play that's three set pieces we can pull out of the bag if needed.

Despite fears of declining numbers, we have had a pretty good turnout for most things, and have generally put on a good show and enjoyed ourselves. A particular memory was the Long Bennington tour where all Dolphins present sang a song (a first, we think), including Gavin who broke a 40-year radio silence to sing very well indeed! We should do this more often – it's part of the glue that holds us together!

We've had some excellent events this year too. One of the highlights of the Dolphin year must have been the performance of the Dancing Butchers at Dancing England in January; while Toby Melville (with Jon playing the music) did Dolphin, and themselves, proud by winning the John Gasson Solo Jig Trophy - in Dolphin kit - at Sidmouth this year!

Without treading on the toes of the Foreman - who will, no doubt, use his report to talk about our dancing skills - your Squiremese Twins would like to thank everyone who has contributed to an enjoyable first year in office. As often is the case, there were a few testing discussions early on, but with the dancing season underway the team has done us proud.

Sadly, 2019 saw the passing of two of the great Dolphin characters: Edward Bellaby, in May; and Laurence Platt, in January.

Edward (formerly Ted Hutchby) was a brilliant and inventive Fool, an excellent dancer and tutor, and a lovely man. He will be fondly remembered by all who knew him. It was good to know that Edward's family appreciated the heartfelt tributes paid by Dolphins past and present. Several of us attended his very moving funeral, and we were honoured to play a part in the wake at Carsington Water.

Laurence was a superb morris musician and a singer of many bawdy and humorous songs, as well as an excellent dancer. There was no funeral service – he had left his body to science – but a celebration of his life was held in June, reflecting many aspects of his life, but was mostly for his political colleagues. As far as I know, Dolphin were not represented at that event.

So, as another good dancing season ends, we just need to say a big 'thank you' to everyone for making it happen! Here's to the next one!

