

Perth Morris Men

This is a brief report on the very successful visit by the Adelaide Morris Men to Perth in the second weekend in August. Seven Adelaide men (& one wife) made the journey across. It was the 1st visit to Perth by another side since 1985 when the National Folk Festival was held in Perth and apparently Hong Kong Morris came on tour. Adelaide had toured previously to this and they have promised not to wait so long till they tour again!

The tour kicked off with the traditional “Meet & Greet” at Little Creatures in Fremantle where both sides entertained locals with various dances. The establishment provided some ale and food to ensure that our visitors felt welcome.

The next “official” event was the Swan Valley tour where four places were visited over six hours. A very congenial bus driver, George, took us to Ironbark Brewery, Oakover Winery, Elmars and Feral Brewing Company where much dancing and drinking occurred. The “Fair Maids” even got back together for the occasion and entertained the crowd. Rosie Fleay did some clog dancing also.

In the evening The Ale was held at Basement on Broadway which used to be KKs and has been a traditional after practice watering hole for the Perth Morris Men for a number of years. Its décor is a bit different from years gone by but it suited our purpose. Rob Bannister took out the prize for the bawdiest limerick whilst Rick Curtis won the prize for the cleverest. Apparently Christine Hogan, an honorary “Perth Morris Man” (she used to play for us years ago and also was part of the musical line up for this weekend), had a lot of fun touring the sex shops of Midland to source novelty prizes for the limerick competition.

Sunday morning was breakfast beside the Swan River adjacent to the University. Paul Mangini, who does an excellent job, organizing May day morning breakfasts at the barbecues in Kings Park, once again stepped up to the plate (no pun intended) with assistance from Phil Hamilton so that everyone could enjoy bacon, eggs, sausages etc. A few dances were enjoyed before we decided to capitalise on the crowd at the University open day. After a few more dances we adjourned to the “Lucky Shag” for some refreshing ales and lunch. The barman did the right thing when prompted and bought our guests a round of drinks. We managed to find some space for some more dancing until the Adelaide contingent had to go to the airport.

From my point of view, after having put a fair amount of effort into the organisation of the event it was great to see it happen in the 1st place and also wonderful to see everyone having such a great time. Thanks to the Adelaide Morris Men for making the effort to come across, thanks to the Fair Maids and Rosie Fleay for their inputs and thanks to the Perth Morris Men for their enthusiasm and efforts that went into making the weekend such a success.

Steven Mansfield
Squire – Perth Morris Men