

2014 Reports



Wassailing - Saturday 11th January

Another wonderful Wassailing Day for Crook Morris. Our thanks go to Mrs Pat Walker, for giving us the run of her orchard and for allowing us to claim and decorate our own special tree and to the management and staff at The Hare and Hounds at Bowland Bridge for handing over almost the entire pub to Crook and friends, for not complaining when their display of hops was so hugely mistreated by those wielding sticks, swords and hankies and for allowing us to park our campervans in their car park overnight so that much drinking could be done by all. Simon Gillow was, as always, a splendid Lord of Misrule and Mark provided what was generally agreed to be the best damson ale to date.

It was lovely to be joined by members of Legs Levens and the Limestone Cowboys and Westmorland Step & Garland Dancers, who braved a cold January to come and dance with us. Crook's singing was strengthened by Kendal Revellers, some of whom gave us very lovely solo/duet songs of their own. Congratulations to Judy and to Simon W. for all their organisation, for rounding us all up, getting us where we were supposed to be at pretty much the right time and for talking to radio Cumbria at an unearthly hour of the morning. Now we wait to see if we will be rewarded with a glorious damson harvest in the autumn. In the meantime we wish all our friends a very Happy New Year. WASSAIL!!

Whitby - Friday 21st - Sunday 23rd February

A small contingent of Crook travelled across the country to join Susan Clough and Ryknild Rabble to celebrate the 9th anniversary of the death of Alan Stewart (Susan's husband). As usual, the high point of the

weekend was the opportunity to dance "Knickers in the Hedgerow", the dance composed by our own Martyn Harvey in memory of Alan. We stayed at a variety of locations around the town, some in vans, some in B&Bs and five of us (Anj, Claire, Evie, Tiffany, and Dan) all huddled together on the living room floor at Anjie's Auntie Hazel's!

Friday night was informal, fish and chips, pizza etc. and a meet-up at The Granby for a drink and a chat.

On Saturday morning Crook, Ryknild and Jet Set assembled at the whalebones for the first set of the day.

We were very lucky to have a clear blue sky, but the wind was blowing a gale and was BITTERLY cold. Some of Crook regretted not putting a vest on that morning, and a variety of hats, gloves and scarves were worn when dancing. Despite the cold, we had a respectable audience (you have to admire the stamina of the folk from the North East) and our own set of groupies (a contingent of Anjie's relatives who followed us around during the day). The next spot at the Bandstand also drew a sizeable crowd, and we added some clogging from Ayliff and a Rapper dance from Ryknild to our performance. After lunch the final spot was by the War Memorial, outside the Tourist Information office, where we had a lovely big space and a large, enthusiastic audience. Crook performed their Rapper dance with the aid of a borrowed musician, then all three sides finished by performing "Big Knickers" together. It was a privilege to have Susan dancing in the Crook set, and a fitting tribute to Alan's memory.

After tea, the Rapper sides of Ryknild and Crook did a tour around the old town pubs. Some of the bars were so small that you wouldn't have thought we would be able to all squeeze in, let alone dance, but we managed to do it without loss of life, limb or

furniture. Crook Rapper would like to thank Richard, of Ryknild, who stood in as our Rapper musician and played for us all evening. The day was made complete by a visit to the Indian restaurant, where Crook ate far too much. It remained only to stagger up the hill to the Granby for a final drink, then home (Auntie Hazel's) to bed (sleeping bag on the floor).

What a great weekend, I can't wait to do it again soon.

Claire Duplock.

Damson Day - Saturday 12th April

Crook have had the pleasure of dancing at Damson Day in the Lyth Valley near Kendal for several years now. We always enjoy performing there and this year was no exception.

A variety of dance traditions, including Cotswold and Border Morris and Rapper, from the North East, were performed throughout the day to an appreciative and enthusiast audience. Crook's Rapper side has recently won awards in three separate categories at the DERT competitions, held this year in Sheffield. A great achievement. We are proud of them. We look forward to continuing our association with Damson Day next year and, of course, all our other venues during the coming summer, until practice begins again in early October.

Rique Llinares – Squire for the day.

Furness Tradition - Friday 11th - Sunday 13th July

Our second visit to this delightful festival was a brilliant weekend. Friday saw Crook stay on the campsite in the wonderful summer weather, relaxing and enjoying each other's company. Surprisingly

this finished off with a late session in a motor home!

Saturday we had a couple of unexpected dancers able to join us plus 3 dancers who were able to come for the day and so we were up to 12 dancers, very impressive. The day kicked off with Crook leading a short procession and then a full day of dancing at the Coronation Hall, the Market Cross and help take the festival out into the community at a couple of care homes. We danced really well, had fun, and entertained our audiences which is what it's all about after all.

The evening big event is a splendid mix of concert spots with songs and tunes, a story teller, a rapper display and 4 short Ceilidh sessions. Crook provided the rapper spot and the stunning acoustics of the Coronation Hall meant that song rang out and sounded better than ever. Thankfully the dance went slickly and was very well received. Two of Crook handled calling for a couple of the dance sessions and also did a sterling job.

Sunday, we joined Furness Morris and Kirkburton Raper for a brief dance spot outside the Coronation Hall then it was off to a pub to catch a "Meet the Wilsons" which was an excellent chance to hear how they approach their craft and listen to some great songs. The final afternoon concert was totally acoustic, relaxed and had a lovely atmosphere.

So, we all came home tired but happy in the knowledge that Crook had acquitted itself really well and most importantly we'd had a great time so thank you FT for asking us, making us welcome and laying on such a good event.

Martyn Harvey