



Paul Woods 1948 - 2011

Anyone who has seen Bristol Morris dance over the last 35 years or so will probably remember Paul Woods announcing the dances as vividly as they remember the dancing. Paul danced a lot, but he also announced in a unique style with a wicked sense of humour which made contact more effectively with an audience than anyone else I have ever seen. And he could announce in French, German and Spanish!

For 35 years Paul devoted a huge amount of time and energy to Bristol Morris Men and had an enormous influence on the side's style, caring deeply about the standard of dance and performance and serving as Bagman and Squire several times. He very supportive of all aspects of Bristol Morris Men and was a quite often at the Rapper sides' pub tours even though he didn't dance it himself. Paul was the first Shepherdess in the Keynsham Mummers Play.

Amongst other things he was largely or solely responsible for the introducing the family camping weekends, the Bristol Morris Christmas card, the unforgettable Uncle Happy Christmas Raffle and keeping in touch with ex-Bristol Morris Men.

Despite problems with his knees in recent years, Paul very rarely missed a practice or a dance-out, and he continued to dance as often as he could, even after he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer last summer. One of his last appearances with Bristol Morris Men on May Day 2011 was one that he enjoyed a great deal.

He was passionate about morris, folk song and dance, and sang regularly at folk clubs and after-dance sessions. In addition to folk music, he enjoyed a very wide range of music and had an enormous collection of CDs.

He worked in the library of Bristol University from 1971 until his retirement in 200. Paul created the Bristol Morris website when many of us had no idea what a website was, and he was an enthusiastic user of sites like Facebook which he used to keep in regular contact with friends throughout his illness.

He died peacefully on Sunday 17 July at St Peter's Hospice.

Bristol Morris Men will miss very much Paul's announcing style and humour, his energy and enthusiasm and we offer our thoughts and condolences to his wife Sandra.