



The Belles of London City

2024 marks **FIFTEEN YEARS** since the first appearance of The Belles of London City! And we've had a suitably busy start to 2024 - a huge thank you to everyone who's invited us so far. Following our February AGM, our new Squire (Kate) and new Fore & Bag (Grace) have been very busy keeping everything jingling - thank you both! Thanks also to our long-suffering... wait, no, long-standing musicians: David Pope, Peter Kanssen, Peter Judge, and Dan Mayfield (who thought he might escape by moving to Thanet: no luck).

NEW DANCERS AND MUSICIANS

A very warm welcome, please, to our huge intake of new dancers this season: Alex, Kat, Elysia, Holly, Emily May, Morgan, Fran, Naomi, Lisa, and Di!

We've also welcomed new musicians Leo, David A, and Glyn - plus honourable mention to Emma who played for us in Margate.



MAY DAY

On May morning we joined friends from **London Pride** on Primrose Hill at 5am where we danced up the sun (even though it was hiding behind the mist). Big thank you to everyone who joined us so bright and early!

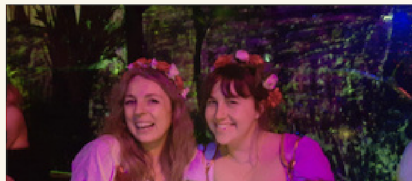
Those of us who were too unwise to go home for a nap went to follow the **Deptford Jack** in the afternoon... then we reunited in the evening to join **Goblin Band** for their triumphant EP launch at the MOTH Club, featuring turnip flinging, crowd surfing, and flower crowns in abundance - Betley was particularly pleased to join the band on stage for the Padstow May Song. OSS OSS!



WHERE WE'VE BEEN

So far in 2024 we've danced at:

- St John's Church Ale
- **Cambridge Morris Men's** 100th anniversary Day of Dance
- May morning on Primrose Hill
- **Goblin Band's** EP launch
- UAL May Day Rave as part of the **Making More Mischief** exhibition
- **Westminster** Day of Dance
- **Bower Street's** "Dirty Weekend" in Margate
- **Thaxted's** weekend of dance
- **Chelsea Arts Club** summer ball



IMPORTANT SHENANIGANS UPDATES

Special mention to Thaxted's Tommy Bassett, who inexplicably lost his stick down a drain at Westminster's Day of Dance. His loss is everyone's gain: please ask Rosie and Leo for a rendition of 'Tommy Dropped His Load' at your first opportunity (or read on for the words...)

COMING UP

In the second half of 2024, look out for Belles at **Lyme Morris Day of Dance** (13 July), **Soho Village Fete** (21 July), **Saddleworth Rushcart** (23-25 August), **Bromyard Folk Festival** (5-8 September), **Peterborough Day of Dance** (28 September) - and more to come!

20 24

15TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR

NEWSLETTER



SUMMER 2024



DANCING



SHENANIGANS



TOMMY BLOCKED THE DRAIN

By Leo Samson - to the tune of Which Side Are You On?

You Morris boys of Thaxted, one moment I abjure,
While I remind you of the danger you face out on tour.
You'll know that I'm not lying, my words could scarce be truer,
Remember when Tom Bassett blocked up London's smallest sewer.
Tommy blocked the drain, Tommy blocked the drain.

The sun was brightly shining, the dancing day was done,
A belly full of English ale filled Thaxted's proudest son.
His head was growing heavy, he was barely on his feet,
None were so surprised as he when he dropped one in the street.
Tommy blocked the drain &c

It was only for a second that he bent down in the road,
But that was all the time it took for him to drop his load.
The dancers gathered round him, could not believe their eyes,
How could a man have dropped a log in a drain of such small size.
Tommy blocked the drain &c

So squires heed my warning if you come to London Town,
Your sticks and bells won't fare you well when lost beneath the ground.
And Tommy if you'll hear me, I don't know why you should,
You'll have to dance with hankies or grip harder to your wood.
Tommy blocked the drain &c

Some say the stick will stay down there until come judgement tide,
And Tom will be found guilty for so letting down his side.
They'll know it wasn't Chelmsford clogging up the bend,
The Angels will find that he wrote his name upon the end.
And they'll sing...
Tommy blocked the drain, Tommy blocked the drain.
Tommy blocked the drain, Tommy blocked the drain.



THE NUTTING GIRL, A REPRISE

By Grace Williams

Come all you jovial fellows, and listen to my song,
It is a little ditty and it won't detain you long.
It's of a fair young damsel, and she lived down in Kent,
Arose one summer's morning, and she a-nutting went.
With my fal-lal, to me ral-tal-lal, Whack-fol-the-dear-ol-day,
And what few nuts that sly girl had
She threw them all away.

It's of a brisk young farmer, a-ploughing of his land
He called unto his horses, and bid them gently stand
And as he sat upon his plough, all for a song to sing
His voice was so melodious, it made the valleys ring.
With my fal-lal &c

It's of this fair young damsel, a-nutting in the wood
His voice was so melodious, it charmed her as she stood
And in that lonely wood, she could no longer stay,
And what few nuts she had, sly girl, she cast them all away!
With my fal-lal &c

She stepped up to Rob Evans, as he sat on his plough
Said she, "Young man I really I feel, Oh I cannot tell you how."
She took him to a shady broom, and there she laid him down,
Said he, "My girl, I think I feel the world go round and round."
With my fal-lal &c

Come all you local farmers, this warning by me take
If you should a-ploughing go, don't stay out too late.
For if you stay too late, so charmingly to sing,
You might soon have a family to care for in the spring!
With my fal-lal &c