



CROOK MORRIS – TV STARS!

You know how it is. You work away from home and get back from a trip to a barrage of answer phone messages. Most are perfectly normal but then there is the one that starts with the words " Are you the man that has something to do with Morris dancing? If you are will you give me a call on..... I'm..... from....." That was the last bit and it was pretty indistinct. I nearly just deleted it but after a few days I phoned the number and found myself chatting with a Border TV producer.

She explained that they were planning a programme on interesting and different hobbies. Would we be interested in being in it? Would we!!! Years of the media negative portrayals of our traditional dancing and they were offering us the chance for Crook to redress the balance a touch.

The side all agreed that it was an opportunity that we just couldn't pass up so we let them know we were more than happy to spend half a day going over and over the same dance! The fact that they wanted the presenter to join in was an added bonus.

What a fascinating experience the day was. We were right that there would be a lot of repetition, but the film crew were certainly professional in catching highlights and asking for the parts that weren't so good to be repeated. I had a list of the main positive points that the side hoped to get featured so that when the presenter came to interview us we were primed to get as many in as possible. Of course several disappeared in the editing but never mind.

Ian, the presenter, was tall and overweight. Oh, but we did have fun with him as he got more out of breath and more red in the face. He wasn't bad at the figures but the stick striking absolutely lost him and we actually had one of his expletives bleeped out when I managed to crack him on the knuckles.

The producer was true to her word and did let us know when the programme was scheduled to go out. Wonderful, most of the side were in France and the rest had popped down to support Richard Hannah at Upton Folk Festival!

However, some of us saw it and it has been saved on a DVD.

How do we feel we came over in the final cut? Not bad at all. As ever the side is clearly enjoying itself, we got Cotswold and Welsh Border featured, a good spread of ages and both sexes were featured, the music was lively and the message that Morris is fun was certainly transmitted.

Martyn Harvey, Foreman