

FOX TALES



The Newsletter of Vulpine Reach

FEB 1997 "ALL THE NEWS THAT'S FIT TO ENGRAVE" A.S. XXXI

Vulpine Reach Celebrates!

January 11 may not be all that significant to most, but to the populace of our little shire, it marked the observation of the traditional celebration called Twelfth Night. For our particular brand of vulpines, that meant a whole day devoted to meeting, greeting, eating too much, showing off our stuff in various contests, and glorifying the thievery that accompanies our gift exchange. Wild, eh?

During the course of that Saturday afternoon, gentles from all over the shire travelled to the New City Fellowship Church with their covered dishes and gift exchange goodies. The afternoon was also scheduled for the Shire Champion Tournament, but due to illness, it was postponed to a later date. That didn't stop three tables from being filled, though.

The first table was used for the display of arts and sciences projects judged for the honor of Shire Artisan. The second accumulated gaily-wrapped boxes and bags and the third groaned with food for the covered dish feast as gentles arrived throughout the afternoon.

As the afternoon was turning into evening, the festivities got into full swing. Gentles who had previously been visiting with friends or looking over the arts and sciences entries (or

covertly weighing and shaking wrapped gifts) now took their trenchers and filled them from the "groaning board."

Midway through the feast, Shire Bard Bebhinn ni Riagain opened this year's competition for the Bardic Staff. As with last year's competition, the winner, Lady Céline, was named by the populace's vote. Also during feast, Mistress Lijsbeth had the populace cast their votes for the Shire Artisan (her evaluation of the entries ended in a three-way tie). Aidan of Stonepillar won the competition with his stained-glass Celtic-style cross, which was later presented to Trinity Lutheran Church in appreciation for providing a meeting place for the Shire.

As usual, the gift exchange was wild and crazy, with much theft and laughter. The popular gifts this year were a necklace made of malachite, a crossed-dagger-and-buckler wall hanging, and a goatskin rug. Many other gifts traded hands numerous times and over all, a grand celebration was had.

Name Registered!

At the November 1996 meeting, Malcolm Maclachlan's name was officially registered by the Laurel Sovereign of Arms. Unfortunately, his device was returned. Congratulations, Malcolm!

CALENDAR

Weekend events are marked in bold, local activities are in normal typeface, and holidays are marked with asterisks.

February

- 10 Class: Hat Making, Lady Francesca
12 ** Ash Wednesday **
14 ** St. Valentine's Day **
15 Feast of St. V. Day Massacre - Seleone
Meridian Maneuvers - Ravenwood
17 ** President's Day **
Class: "Parzival", THL Richard Fenwick / Fox Tales deadline
22 Sable Swan - Glynn Rhe
Pyre in the Shire - Phoenix Glade
24 Birthday Meeting, Sheet Painting, Dance

March

- 1 Black Gryphon Collegium - Thor's Mt.
Forest Wars - Blackmoor Keep
A Funner Event - Yeoman's Wood
Hit List - Osprey
3 Biz Mtg, F.T. Dist.
8 Highland Havoc - Peregrine, Iron Mt.
Highland Demo (1-day) - Salt Keep
Baronial Tax Revolt - Owl's Nest
10 Class: Japanese Swords, Ld. Dorin
13 - 16 Gulf Wars - Ardarnoe, Grey Niche

Meetings and Practices:

Local chapter meetings are at Trinity Lutheran Church, Hixson Pike and Hwy 153 on Monday evenings at 7:30 p.m. Fighter practice is held at the Tennessee River Park behind Chattanooga State Technical Community College near the railroad bridge on Sunday afternoons at 2:30 p.m.

Contact Lord James at 949 - 4394 for information on Archery Practices.

BEST BETS:

2-14 Meridian Maneuvers, Indian Springs State Park, Jackson, GA (167 mi.). Prices: \$15, \$9 for daytrip, members deduct \$3, all attendees must purchase a GA park pass for \$2. "Mini-war" format with 5 scenarios, A & S competition, classes, feast limited to 150 - reserve early. Gulf War fundraiser. Site discreetly wet, no pets, no smoking

inside buildings.

3-1 Black Gryphon, Fall Creek Falls State Park Group Lodge, Pikeville, TN (61 mi.) Prices: \$25 weekend, \$15 daytrip w/feast, \$6 daytrip w/o feast - members deduct \$3. Classes include: Heavy Weapons Strategy, Polish culture, newby classes, RUM classes brewing and vintning, embroidery. Gosling activities. Feast limited to 125, 100 beds in a heated lodge - reserve EARLY!! Crash space available in the classrooms. Site is discreetly wet. Excellent "first event" for the newcomer.

REGNUM

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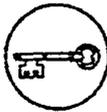
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Wm BlackFox O.P.

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From The Seneschal

Unto the good gentles of the Shire of Vulpine Reach doth the Laird Davoc Walkere send warm winter greetings.

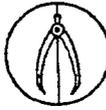
Well, February is here. That means that all the Doomsday reports are done and we are moving farther into the new year. We had a great time at our Twelfth Night revel. Congratulations to Aidan, our new Shire Artisan, and to Selene, our new Shire Bard. I was glad to see as many good competitors as I did, that showed what this shire is capable of. I'm looking forward to seeing what everybody does next year! Due to illness and the weather, our Shire Champion's list has been postponed. Details of that competition will be forthcoming as soon as they are available.

I have heard it said that this shire is "cliquish". As strange as it may seem, I agree with that statement, but not the way it may have been intended. It is a simple fact of our society that ALL SCA groups are "cliquish". These cliques, however, are of a different variety than are those you may encounter other places. What people perceive as cliques are really special interest groups. These groups are open to anyone who wants to get involved in the activity that the group does. We have musicians, fighters, costumers, cooks, artists, drama people, scroll painters, woodworkers; the list goes on and on. Many people are in more than one of these groups, but I don't know of anybody that is in all of them. If you see someone doing something that looks interesting ask them about it. They won't be offended, I promise (if they are that's their problem). Most people will cheerfully give you more information about the things they are interested in than you can possibly absorb. If you are still interested, ask them if they can help you get started in that activity too. You may be surprised to find yourself quickly immersed in an active group.

I will leave you with one little reminder: As the weather begins to warm up, people will begin to go to more events. At some of these events, they may have the opportunity to be given a nice surprise by someone royal. But it won't happen if no one writes letters of recommendation.

In service to the Kingdom, the Crown, and the people of Vulpine Reach,

Davoc



From the Arts and Sciences Minister

Hey, hello, and what are you making this week?

First of all, I want you all to know that the A+S report for the year went out on January 9th, and it has made it to Mistress Rosemounde, and all is well in the world. So, now that report is done, you might be wondering what I want in those other reports you fill out in the meetings. For starters, I need your mundane and SCA name, and a list of what you have done. Basically, I want to see what you have been doing. Be as specific as possible - saying that you have learned about medieval widgets does nothing for me. Please tell me the book you read, or the lecture you attended, or however else you learned it. Telling me that Lord Bob showed you how to make it really isn't enough, unless Lord Bob happens to be a recognized expert in medieval widgets. Remember, this is not an arts and crafts group. We are a medieval reenactment group, and I want to see that you are trying to learn how "they" did it. I would like to know something about the thing you made, too. I like descriptions including what kind of fabric you used, for example. Did you dye the fabric yourself? Did you create your own Celtic interlace design and then embroider it on your tablecloth? I would especially like it if you could bring the item in that you are working on or have finished so we all can learn about it. Anything you made, did, or learned about can be appropriate. For more information, please ask me.

On to other topics. I was glad to see so many interesting entries to the Shire's 12th night A+S and bardic competitions. I think this shire has a healthy contingent of artsy folk, and there's always room for more. Remember that the Kingdom A+S competition is coming up, and consider entering. See me if you need info on documentation. Also, remember that A+S entries at wars earn points that help determine the winner - so you can serve your kingdom with your talents even if they aren't

used on the battlefield.

I am interested in having a Craft Night (sometimes known as Sewing Madness, although it is not limited to sewing) at my house on the first and third Wednesdays of the month, starting around 7pm. The idea is to bring whatever you are working on, and we will all help each other and share information. Plus if you are interested in learning how to do something, you might want to show up. You can find out if you really want to invest the time and money involved in making leather boots, candles, or scrolls, for example. I have most of the supplies needed for these and other projects, and will let you use them at my house.

I know that most of us have things we want to work on but we never find the time. This night is planned to give you an excuse to finish that half-finished 15 piece T-tunic once and for all, and also to give you ideas for other skills you can learn. Please let me know if you are interested in coming.

Kate's Find of the Week

I went on an adventure and discovered a very different fabric store. It is called Flower's Fabric and they have an unusual selection of fabric because they get odd lots and truck loads of seconds. This means that they have no sections and there's no telling what you will find in there. This store is like one huge clearance table. But I found it worth my while because the fabric is so inexpensive. For example, their upholstery fabric is \$4.69 a yard, which is less than half the usual price. Regular fabric bolts are usually \$1.89 and \$2.89 a yard. I also found some trim for 59 cents a yard. However, another part to this story is that there is often no indication what the fabric content really is. The bolts simply aren't labeled. Sometimes you can tell if a material is cotton if you scrunch up a corner of the material, and it wrinkles a lot. Other than that, you have to go by experience to find out what the fabric is. The person in the store might also know, as well. This is not the fabric store to go to for basic stock such as buttons, thread, or facing. They get what they can in, and they never know what is coming in the next shipment.

In spite of the unusual nature of this store, I recommend it for those folks who are searching for some material other than that

found at Hancock's. Their card says they are located "1 and 1/2 miles South on Highway 41, Ringgold Georgia." The real directions are to take Ringgold Road toward Ringgold, and go into the town, staying on Ringgold Road. When you see the train trestle, it is 1.5 miles ahead on the left. It is a low white building with faded blue trim and a yellow portable sign that is broken. The phone number is 965-6161, and be sure to call ahead of time. This is a family-run business, and they are there when they can be. Saturdays are usually safe, when they are open 9:30 to 3ish.

If you know of any other stores that would be of interest to the A+S side of things, even those you have discovered on your travels, let me know and I will spread the word.

- Kate



From the Chronicler

Unto the good gentles of our fair Shire come good greetings and wishes of a warm, snug winter.

Well, yet another chapter has closed and another has opened in my life. I am now living over in Dunlap at my father's house and have fully moved out of the apartment that had been my home for the last twelve years. It is a hard transition, especially when I get off work at midnight sometimes and really don't look forward to that hour's drive to a nice soft bed.

On the other hand, I did have a lot of good help in moving my stuff over there: Laird Davoc did a lot of heavy lifting and packing and Lady Caoilfionn's help in cleaning and lending use of her huge Norwegian wagon ("Fjord", I think it was) was invaluable. Great big Kudos to you both. Due to that move, this here rag is a week late. Sorry 'bout that.

Prime toumney season will be opening in about a month, so start making your plans to travel about having fun and bashing to your heart's content. However, (you knew that word was coming...) now is a great time for you to do a safety check on your cart, wagon, dragon, or whatever you call your vehicle and fix whatever's wrong. Better now than later when you wanna go but can't or you go and find yourself stranded twixt

hither and yon with no sign of a dragon doctor.

Where do we start? Change the oil; this is an oft-overlooked piece of preventative maintenance that will likely see you through the toumey season and may well save you a whole heap 'o money in the long run (priced engine replacements lately?).

You may need a tune up, too. Try this: load all your toumey gear in your car, along with a buddy and a full ice chest, then climb Lookout Mountain on Scenic Highway. If you can't do better than 15 m.p.h., have the engine checked. If you *can* do better than 15 m.p.h. but it looks like Old Faithful erupted under your hood, change the belts and hoses - all of them - and have the radiator flushed.

How are your lights? Get your buddy at fighter practice to stand behind your car and check your brake lights. The rest you can check yourself.

Two last related items: tires and brakes. Take a penny out of your pocket and put it edgewise with Lincoln's head downwards into the groove of your tires. If you can see the top of his head, you'll probably find yourself on the side of the road at 3 a.m. changing a flat before the end of summer. Such tires also are more than dangerous on a wet road - change 'em. Oh, and that scraping sound you hear when you hit the brakes? Well, that's your car's way of saying that you'd better have lots of empty road ahead of you when you try to stop.

Put off buying that new helm or ten yards of cloth if you have to, but make sure you have a safe car to bring you home from the event. It's cheaper to spend \$70 for brakes than \$7000 for a hospital stay caused by an accident. Keep safe, gentles!

- Jas. Tox

Members' Missives:

Lately, a situation has arisen here that I feel must be addressed. I do not direct this toward ANY individual here, more so to ALL of us here at Vulpine Reach. We meet regularly in a church building (no big revelation there) - now it doesn't matter what any of us believe personally, being that we are guests in this building - so we should conduct ourselves accordingly. I know that many people in our world feel that if we are

adults, we should be able to act, speak, and carry on as we please, as long as we don't hurt anyone else and if anyone has a problem with our actions, well, then that's *Their* problem and they need to get over it. But, as adults, we are more responsible for our actions and words than ever before. If a guest comes into my house, that guest will conduct themselves in a respectful manner to me and my family and to the way we believe. If that guest does not, they will not be a guest in my home again.

One of my best friends is of the opinion that when she is a guest in someone's home, that they are to accept her and her actions - foul language and topic of discussion that she chooses to converse in - even in the presence of children. She also is no longer a guest in most of our friends' homes and probably won't be allowed in my house again, either.

The same situation exists here where we meet. It doesn't matter what our personal convictions are (and I'm not trying to preach to anyone here), we are meeting in a church and we are guests here. If any members of this church happened to come by and overhear some of the language used in our meetings, we would soon find ourselves looking for a new meeting site. Similarly, if the pastor of the church we held 12th Night at had been present and overheard some of the language, we would not be allowed to use that site again either.

Now, since most of us here are adults, I believe that we know how to conduct ourselves in a church building. In fact, most *children* that I know, know how to act when they are in a church. I believe that at most of our jobs we are to conduct ourselves in a certain manner, so I don't think that this is too much to expect of our behavior where we meet. If I can control my language, then you can, too. And since we are in an organization that stresses Chivalry, Manners, and Respect for others, I believe that we should follow through with those actions - whether the members of the church are here or not.

That is the true way of showing not only respect to the members of this church, but also our gratitude to them for letting us use their building.

- Lord Ari Williamsen

I had a friend who frequently came to my house. She knew I didn't smoke and would excuse herself to go onto the porch to have a cigarette. I eventually convinced her that I don't mind people smoking in my house (showing her a full ashtray helped).

Being a part of the SCA, we take great pride in the fact we are rather more courteous than our more mundane counterparts. Sometimes, we even are. We, as the SCA, are also generally more tolerant of other peoples' views and beliefs. Any number of taboo social strictures are not felt in the SCA. These two tenants of our organization blend well together - usually. When they clash, which wins?

If you came into my home, you would most probably act as my friend in the first paragraph. If you didn't smoke, you would certainly not do things that you thought might offend me. That is very kind of you. You would not smash my dishes. You would not discuss subjects that distressed me. You would comport yourself in a manner of a gentleperson being the guest in someone's home. You would even not wait for me to ask you not to engage in a particular activity; you would think, "He does not appreciate that. I will not do that and make him uncomfortable in his own home." In fact, if you are typical for the SCA, I would have a bit of a battle on my hands to convince you to do something in my home that you thought might inconvenience me. I know of very few (if any) people in the SCA who would not act this way.

Oddly enough, though, we don't always put this into practice. If the Shire met in my home and I asked that no profanity be used, I daresay no one would use profanity, because it was my house and any member of the SCA would respect my wishes. The Shire of Vulpine Reach meets in a church. Even though it is common practice for mundanes not to use foul language, we use it quite frequently. The practice is quite common and if you listen to the general course of conversation during and after a meeting, you *will* hear it.

The question is not whether profanity is forbidden by the Bible (it isn't, except for taking the Lord's name in vain, according to my recollection), but *the courtesy we owe our hosts*. The church lets us use the room

for free and it can only be expected that we would extend the church the same courtesy that we extend to *each other*. Profanity is not accepted in the building or on the grounds of any mainstream church I am familiar with. It's not accepted by most of the non-mainstream churches, either. If members of the church were to listen in on our conversation, they would feel justified in asking us to find another meeting place - and they would be right; it is *their* building.

It is also not a question of what the church should or should not be offended at. We are not members of the church and have no right to dictate their rules, written or unwritten. We may often disagree with beliefs our hosts may have (political, religious, etc.) but we still respect their wishes if we enter their homes. Should we not do the same for the organization that hosts us each Monday night?

- THL Alexander Ravenscroft

Show Review: *El Cid*

OK people, here it is. A movie that you must see. If you've just glanced at the title and kept going, you've missed out. This is a GREAT movie.

El Cid is set in Spain in the year 1080 AD. Spain is divided, half it's people are Christian and the other half are Moor. The African emir Ben Usiff is taking advantage of this situation by encouraging the moors to revolt against Spain's Christian king. This of course starts a massive civil war. After the first battle we meet our hero, Rodrigo Diaz of Bevia, played by Charlton Heston. Rod starts off by granting mercy to some Moorish prisoners. By doing this he not only makes an inroad to unification and peace, he is also charged with treason. This is also where the now-freed Moors give him a new name, "The Cid", meaning "Lord" (probably because he saved their kiesters).

Alas, Rod's merciful action puts HIS kiester in the fire. He is tried for treason and his father's honor is called into question by the King's champion. Rod must defend his father's honor and winds up killing the champ. PLOT COMPLICATION! The King's champion...is ALSO the father of Rod's Fiancée! WOOPS. As you can imagine, this causes some problems.

Besides this ensuing predicament, there's

another problem: the king dies. The king has several children and you guessed it, POWER STRUGGLE. However, Rod intervenes and calms things down. But our Moorish friend Ben Yousiff attempts to take advantage of the situation by staging an assassination that will implicate the King's kids and create civil unrest among the Christian population. Now, there is a cool scene where Rod kills the assassin. You gotta see this, it's AWESOME! Rod throws open a door and plunges his sword into the assassin.

Rod is also a sharp guy. He forces the surviving brother to take an oath on the Bible that he didn't have his brother killed. Good move, this assures the entire population of Spain that he is truly innocent. However, since it is also forbidden to make a king swear, the new king (who is humiliated as well as vindicated) exiles Rod... so maybe Rod wasn't so smooth. Rod loses everything and is no longer the King's champion. BUT when he leaves, his wife follows out and now reaffirms her love for him. It seems that she's seen that he's a truly honorable man. Something else has also happened... the whole country has seen Rod's honor and follows after him.

Years later, Ben Yousiff has called out the King, and prepares to invade Spain. Now, the King may be a spoiled, pampered, self-centered twerp but he's not totally stupid either. He calls on Rod to help defend Spain. Rod is more than willing. He even manages to get the Spanish Moors to agree to help defend Spain. The King rejects their help because they're not Christians. Maybe the King IS totally stupid after all.

Anyway, Rod and the Spanish Moors decide to attack Ben Yousiff on their own, forget the King. The King meanwhile leads an attack on Yousiff's army, doing exactly as Rod told him not to do, and he gets (if you'll pardon the pun) a royal butt kicking. The little piss ant then has Rod's family imprisoned in order to draw him out. Now, this creates a mess, but it also gives Rod more credibility than the King.

Rod then further endeavors himself to the Spanish Moors by giving them food in a most unusual way. This turns the Moors against their leaders and the army that is

loyal to Ben Yousiff. Rod is one sharp dude. Rod is so sharp that all the people, Spanish Christians and Spanish Moors alike, proclaim him their King. Rod... refuses, and declares this great victory in the name of the King of Spain. THIS REALLY makes the King look like a twerp. And Rod is even more loved by the people of Spain, believe me you can't help but love this guy. I mean forget Stormin' Norman Schwartzkopf, I'm gonna' follow Rod into battle.

And let me tell ya' there is an INCREDIBLE battle. No, it's not as graphic or gory as the scenes in *Braveheart*, but it's every bit as exciting and well choreographed. In fact, I liked the battle scenes in *El Cid* better than in *Braveheart*. To be honest, I liked *El Cid* itself as much, if not more than, *Braveheart*.

I'm not gonna' tell ya' anymore of the storyline. Rent it! It's a real winner! It's also long, about 3 hrs. It is a movie about honor, courage and real sacrifice. In fact, I dare say that good ol' Mel Gibson was influenced by this film. And there's NO CHEESE in this film. The actors are superb, the acting is superb, the writing is GREAT, the sets and costumes are VERY authentic looking. In short, to my eye it was fairly flawless.

And let's face it, Charlton Heston is AWESOME! Believe it or not, his portrayal of Rod in this film is NOT as interchangeable as with his other roles (you know Heston does tend to play a lot of his roles the same. I can often mix his dialog from different movies together, for example: "HEAR ME O ISRAEL! My God, soon they'll be breeding us like cattle. Tell me something: does man still take his brothers' food? Massalah, I promise not to carry out the oath I swore with every stroke of that oar you chained me to. GET this net off me you dirty Apes!" *Ten Commandments*, *Soylent Green*, *Planet of the Apes*, *Ben Hur*, *Planet of the Apes*, in order).

Honestly, this is a GREAT movie. I fully recommend it and I don't believe that you'll be disappointed. If you liked *Braveheart*, you'll like *El Cid*.

Now for something completely different:

I would like to clear up a certain mistake. In last month's *Fox Tales*, Kate the

Green reported in her *Non-Event Event Report* that we all watched a - and I quote - "Cheezy" video that I had provided.

NO! NO! NO!! UNTRUE!! I AM INNOCENT!!!! The cheezy video that we watched belonged to *Kate*!! That's right. That vid was *HERS* (spiked heels, bad lighting, poor chubbing and all!!). I had provided an incredible video entitled *Beyond the Mind's Eye* which featured stories and effects told with computer-generated imagery and a soundtrack written and performed by Kerry Livgren (formerly of rock band *Kansas*). This video was not "cheezy" and we all enjoyed it. [Ed. Note: *I have seen this video myself and will back Lord Ari to the hilt - it is an excellent work of computer graphics and music, although most of the graphics came from more than one source and is tied together with the music.*] I admit that I do review a LOT of cheezy flicks for *Fox Tales* [Ed. Note: *for which the editor is grateful*], but I don't intentionally search out the cheezy movies. I do like QUALITY entertainment and will provide it for my friends, too!! I do have taste, ya know!!

In your viewing service,

-Ari

P.S. I still love ya, Kate.

Grim Grumbles

by Lord Ursus Grim

One of the reasons I read a lot of fiction is because I like to be entertained. It is one of my prime complaints that there are so few non-fiction writers who know how to entertain me with their subjects. Take the Crusades, for example. This one subject has enough material to engage just about anyone's imagination. Terry Jones proved that with his *Crusades*! Series on the History Channel. Cruel acts of random violence, blood, guts, war, religion, heroes, villains, beggars, charlatans, betrayal, revenge, holy war, the Inquisition, magic, demons, assassins, marijuana, Elvis,....(Elvis is everywhere, Elvis is in the Nutty-Buddies...! Okay, maybe *Elvis* wasn't there, but there was enough pot floating around the halls of Hashishim to keep John Denver on his "Rocky Mountain High" for a thousand

years!)

So...Where was I going with all this? Ah, yes. The Crusades.

There are a variety of really good books on the shelves these days which are also entertaining:

Tales of the Knights Templar edited by Katherine Kurtz. ISBN: 0-446-60138-1, *Aspect Fantasy* This anthology brings together some of the most popular writers in the fantasy genre (Katherine Kurtz, Poul Anderson, Deborah Turner Harris, Elizabeth Moon, to name a few...) to unleash their respective imaginations on one of the most mysterious organizations of the medieval world. Each story is based on a certain aspect of the history of the Order with a short introduction to explain these facets to the uninitiated. The result is in some cases splendid and in some cases mediocre, but this book makes an extremely good starting point for studying about the Knights Templar. Also included is a thorough bibliography of reference works for further study, some of which will be detailed in this column.

Ursus rates this: A-

Holy Blood, Holy Grail ISBN: 0-440-13648-2 Dell Publishing and *The Temple and the Lodge* ISBN: 1-55970-126-9 Arcade, both by Baigent, Leigh, and Lincoln.

I list these books together because that is how they are best taken. Meticulously researched, Baigent, et al. present a fascinating viewpoint on the possible truth about what those nutty Templars were really up to. We will never know for certain whether the authors' theories are accurate, but the implications are staggering. I won't go into detail here because some people tend to believe this book is blasphemous and should be burned. But these two books are probably two of the most intriguing I have ever read. I also recommend them to all conspiracy buffs, as this could be one of the biggest conspiracies of all time.

Ursus rates this: A

Next month, Part Two of *Grim Grumbles* will continue his in-depth coverage of books on the Crusades. Would Gerald be impressed? You decide....

Show Review:

The Wonderful World of Horses

Okay, those of you who know me know that I'm not naturally a "horse-person," having never owned and only rarely having ridden these magnificent creatures. That doesn't mean, however, that I have no appreciation for their capabilities or intelligence.

Horses played an important role in the agricultural expansion of Europe and Britain and were invaluable in warfare where a fast cavalry turned the tide of the battle. Very few historical breeds remain in today's world, simply because the mechanized means of doing what the horse once did is cheaper and more efficient. The Clydesdale actually was an endangered specie for the simple reason that nobody wanted a draught horse when a truck was cheaper to keep and use. When it comes to modern warfare the story is the same; a jeep with a driver nearly attains the intelligence level of a medieval war horse and is less expensive to train and maintain.

However, there are those who do train and exercise the movements of classical equitation to this day: the basic cavalry movements taught for attack and defense are displayed every four years in the Olympics in the dressage (pronounced "dra-sage") competition, as well as in equestrian shows like The Wonderful World of Horses. This show features two historical breeds, the Andalusian and the Lipizzan.

The show itself lasted nearly two hours and displayed primarily the Lipizzaners being put through their paces in basic dressage movements and showed examples of the "airs above the ground," leaps and kicks historically performed by the horse to aid the defense of his rider. These maneuvers are just short of awe-inspiring to watch, when you consider that you're seeing over a thousand pounds of muscle and balance as much as three feet clear of the ground *kicking outwards with fractions of a second to get their legs back under them before gravity has it's say on the matter.*

Almost as impressive to me was the basic dressage exercises performed. The Lipizzans were wonderfully ridden, with very little visual evidence of the "aids" (cues to the horse made via leg, seating in the

saddle, and rider's balance) given to the mount. For me, the show was a great chance to see up close the same type of riding I'd seen at the Olympic dressage finals.

The finale of the show involved a choreographed dressage routine with six Lipizzaners and their riders performing intricate formation and interlocked movements. If it helps, think of that part of the show as an equine equivalent to a Blue Angels flight routine.

Granted, it was a commercial show, but the work was nicely done and the real stars, the Lipizzaners, put on a first-class performance. If you're really into horses or just want to see what a horse could've really done to put the hurting on a foot soldier in medieval warfare, this show is for you.

Book Nook:

Understanding Illuminated Manuscripts:

A Guide to Technical Terms

by Michelle P. Brown

(J.P. Getty Museum/British Library Board)

This softbound book is a dictionary of words dealing with the study of illuminated manuscripts. The terms are listed alphabetically and contain information about each term starting with the different types of abbreviations to be found in illuminated manuscripts and ending with Zoomorphic initials. It abounds with illustrations in color and black and white, each of the illustrations is fully documented with all the pertinent information. This book would be useful for any serious student of the illustrated manuscript.

-Elisande De Citeaux

Acknowledgments

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Vulpine Reach Talent Directory

The Vulpine Reach Talent Directory is designed to help old fogey and newcomer alike in finding assistance. Keep in mind that we are all volunteers; just be patient and keep trying if you don't get hold of us on the first try.

If you have a talent or skill in a particular field and would like to help others but you aren't on the directory, contact me! It's a simple matter to add your name. If I've listed your skills incorrectly or you are unable for some reason to provide assistance in whatever capacity, contact me! It's also a simple matter to change your entry or drop your name from the directory. We're looking for a few good men (and women) - with know-how and a willingness to help out other shire members.

Lady Rhiannon of Ravenswood (Mary Barkubein, 698 - 2691) Crochet

Mellisande of Rennes (Brenda Britton, 870 - 0511) Embroidery

Camolus of Britian (Vernon Cockereil, 375 - 6760) Engraving, Wood carving

Mistress Lijsbeth Tijz van Brugge (Leslie Dulin, 886 - 6256) Visual Arts, Research, Documentation, Cooking, Early period Stuff

Lord Ursus Grim (Charles Dodson, 265 - 3948) Illumination and all things scribed

Lady Francesca d'Angelo (Teresa Ivey-Dodson, 265 - 3948) Embroidery, Spinning, Camping, Illumination, "Anything Italian"

Lord Dorin Schwartzmitt (David Holmes, 706 - 675 - 7410) Blacksmithing, "hot iron" work, Wood working, Fencing

Lady Egeina Rabbette (Rabbit Kadrich, 866 - 8266) Sewing, Costuming, Research, Lace-making, Camping

Lady Rachelle du Pied-Leger (Rachel Lightfoot, 706 - 965 - 7947) Music, Period Theatre, Heraldry, Dancing, Sewing

Lord James Toxophilus (Jim Long, 949 - 4394) Archery, Wine making, Performing Arts, Writing, Music (penny whistle and bodhran), Camping

THL Alexander Ravenscroft (Brian Moore, 870 - 5132) "Anything Heraldic"

Kate the Green (Betsy O'Shee, 629 - 1238) Glass bead-making, Period Jewelry, Basic garbing, Enthusiasm

Lord Wilhelm Fixler (Steve Parker, 478 - 3129) Fighting, SCA weapons making

Lord Llywelyn ap Alawn (Lindy Pate, 825 - 6258) Fighting, Brewing, Fencing, Brewing, Wood working, Brewing, Armoring, Brewing (but not all at the same time)

THL Richard Fenwick (Ken Scott, 698 - 5007) Fighting, SCA weapons making, Armoring, Heraldry

THL Julia of the Flowers (Julie Scott, 698 - 5007) Art, Cooking

Lady Elisande de Citeaux (Diane Taylor, 877 - 3825) Bobbin lace making, Spinning, Weaving, Embroidery, Calligraphy, Illumination

Laird Davoc Walkere (Randy Walker, 875 - 5417) Music, Bardic Arts, Performing Arts, Archery, Jewelry making

Lady Diana Fiona O'Shera (Diane Walker, 875 - 5417) Cooking, Sewing, Costuming, Jewelry making, Pottery, Ceramics, Herbs, Gardening

Brigid of Gaels (Tina Williams, 375 - 6760) Engraving, Wood Carving, Wood Working, Herbalism

Lady Anastasia Volkova (Anne Wolf, 423 - 949 - 4273) Shoe making, Leather crafting, Camping

Fox Valley

The Newsletter of the Shire of Valpine Reach
c/o JIM LONG, HCR 65 Box 35, Durlap, TN 37327



*"Per chevron dovetailed throughout argent and vert, two borage
flowers azure barbed vert and a unicorn's head couped argent."*