

FOX TALES

The Newsletter of Vulpine Reach

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

Rhea Demo Rousing Success

"Dear Diane,

I am sending out a big THANK YOU to you, Jim, Leslie, Betsy, and Will. I cannot begin to tell you how much I appreciate the time you sacrificed to spend the day with Mrs. Dixon and I. You inspired and excited us both!

Yesterday, I asked some of the children to share their reactions to your visit; immediately, their eyes lit up and hands shot into the air. They were so excited about what they had learned and experienced. You made a lasting impression on many of them, I know. I also encouraged them to think about getting involved in things like the SCA to enrich their lives. I explained to them that it may be an art class, a book club, etc., but to try something new and not limit themselves!! (Something I am learning and trying to apply to my own life).

Thank you again for your generosity and enthusiastic presentation. I hope to see you again in the future!!

Very Sincerely,

Bekky Batchelder"

(Rhea Central Elementary School)

On Thursday, February 6, the Vulpine Reach Road Show presented a day-long educational demo for the sixth-grade reading classes under the

instruction of Bryan College student teacher Ms. Batchelder. Veteran Road Show members Mistress Lijsbeth, Lady Diana, and Lord James welcomed the assistance of Lord Ari Williamsson and Lady Catherine Barret of Canterbury, both of whom proved to have excellent Road Show skills!

The demo consisted of making our educational presentation to four well-prepared classes of sixth graders throughout the day, with a lunch break between the second and third classes and a period-long break between the third and fourth classes. The way the classes were scheduled were ideal for our presentation, since we had the time to relax somewhat toward the latter part of the day.

The demo included our usual introductory video and 'everyday life in the Middle Ages' program plus a display of armor and weapons that took the students' and teacher's breath away and an impromptu concert by Lord James and Lady Caoilfionn Coamhanach (who works as an interpreter for the deaf at the same school). The demo ran smoothly, thanks to Ms. Batchelder's preparation, and our Road Show team fielded quite a number of questions.

Overall, the Rhea Central demo was probably one of the most delightful and fun of any we have done.

CALENDAR

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

March

- 10 Class: Japanese Swords, Ld. Dorin / Fox Tales distribution
- 12 Isabel DuBois' 18th Birthday!!!!
- 13 - 16 Gulf Wars - Ardanroe, Grey Niche
- 17 ** St. Patrick's Day **
"Ceilidh" - Irish music and stories and stuff / Fox Tales deadline
- 21 ** Vernal Equinox **
- 22 Artisan's Event - S. Downs
- 23 ** Palm Sunday **
- 24 Class: History O' Beads, Mistress Lijsbeth
- 28 ** Good Friday **
- 29 Brigid's Fancy - Lyon's Mountain
- 30 ** Easter Sunday **
- 31 Workshop: Sheet Painting

April

- 1 ** Rhino Season Officially Opens **
- 5 Spring Coronation - Rising Stone
- 7 Business Meeting / Fox Tales dist.
- 12 Candlelight Camp - Sm. Grey Bear Spring Event - An Dun Thelne Boar Hunt - Nant-Y-Derwyddon
- 14 Classes: Period Rosaries, Kate the Green "Aidan's Class," Aidan of Stonepillar
Fox Tales deadline

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:

3-13 Gulf Wars, King's Arrow Ranch, Lumberton, MS (384 mi.) Tenting prices: Arr. Wed: \$29/\$20 daytrip, Thu: \$26/\$17, Fri: \$23/\$14, members deduct \$5, photo ID's required at check-in. Contact Earl Marshal for fighting conventions. For

information packet, contact THL Kathleen Simonetta Riario at (318) 742 - 4230. Biggest war near us, aside from Pernsic. Pop Chiv. flier has only limited information and refers readers to a web page - a real let-down for those without computer access.

4-5 Spring Coronation, Camp Marymount, Fairview, TN (135 mi.) Prices: Before 3-21: \$24/\$17 daytrip w/£/\$10 w/o feast, after and at door: \$27, daytrip same. Dancing, fighting, Coronation, merchants, Friday night taven, all meals provided, feast limited to first 300. Site is close to us for this big an event. A must go!!

REGNUM

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Brian Moore (423) 870 - 5132

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Betsy O'Shea (423) 629 - 1238

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Diane Walker (423) 875 - 5417

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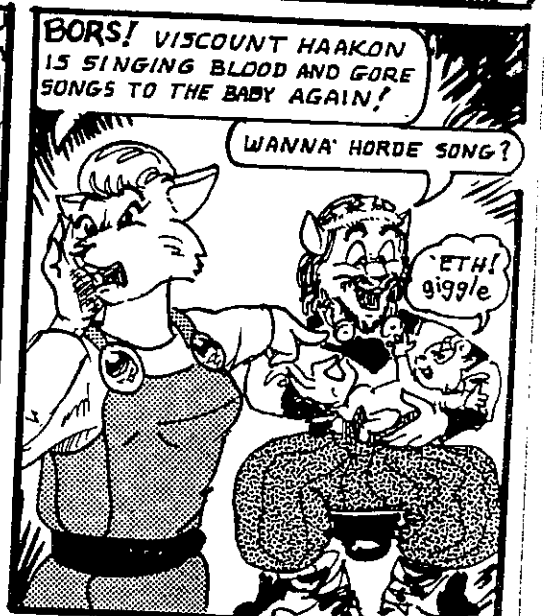
Royal University Provost - Lady Rachelle du Pied-Leger

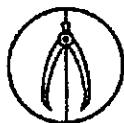
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Warthaven™





From The A & S Minister

Unto the good gentles of the Shire of Vulpine Reach from Lady Kate the Green come good greetings.

The first night of Craft Madness went very calmly and nicely on Wednesday the 19th. THL Alexander came over and made his own leather apprentice belt and Lavonda Burrow came to contraplate designs for her second tunic. We arranged for a separate night to work on it - which is the way I wanted it to go. For me, sewing is a four-to-five hour activity that takes me the major portion of the house, so I would rather do that on a mutually agreed-upon night other than on Craft Madness Night.

My basic concept of all SCA-dian skills is that we should help each other to become self-sufficient. I do not believe that I would be doing anyone a favor if I did all for them. Now, I do not expect for anyone to be able to teach others after just one experience with a particular medium, but I *do* expect for them to become more comfortable with it and hopefully to understand why we cut this that way or why we used this type of leather for that project. Thus went this said night of Craft Madness and thus I feel it was a success.

THL Alexander learned about the strip-and-strap maker, how to dye and set leather and how to put a belt loop on with rivets. He did 95% of the actual work and got a finished belt in two hours (lots of drying time involved) after wanting one for literally years. I personally was unhappy with how dark the belt came out, but that's good, too. It means that I learned that I need to test the leather before dyeing it and learn how to dye more evenly. Watching Sir Robert Glendon of Auk dye a new squire's belt for a new squire taken by His Majesty this weekend (see *Travels: Meridian Maneuvers*) taught me something as well about dying, so hopefully the next leather dying experiment will go better. I believe THL Alexander was pleased overall and had fun. Lavonda also enjoyed looking at pictures of medieval people and hopefully all those cool color and designs are percolating in her head. I am pleased that she is becoming more confident

about her sewing abilities and has taken this mantra to heart: "This isn't brain surgery. We do this because we enjoy it!" I think that's a good mantra for us all when we get frustrated with a new skill.

Upon further reflection, consultation with other interested parties and a rare burst of sanity, I am changing the nights of Craft Madness to the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month. Please call me beforehand for directions and to let me know you are coming or let me know at the meeting. Anyone who is interested in learning and working is welcome to come. It starts around 6:30 p.m. and lasts until we are done or run out of brain cells. See you there!

-Kate

Travels:

Glaedenfeld's 12th Knight

12th Knight! Er...12th Night, that is. Yes, it's that time of the year again...that time when all of us SCAdians have finally got all of our mundane celebrations out of the way and we get set to finally

REALLY GET DOWN!!!

Being that we vulpines had put our own 12th knight - I mean 12th Night off for a weak - WEEK, I journeyed to celebrate the festivities with our friends in the Shire of Glaedenfeld. This time, I was better prepared, in that I packed the car the day before I left. I met up with my travelling companions, newcomers Fergus Conner and his lady Elizabeth Dowden (mka Mike and Beth - my apologies for the spelling) at the Jasper exit at 6 a.m. Saturday and we caravanned up to the site. Let me tell ya'll this: when you're drivin' early in the mornin' and you're half asleep, *NOTHING* will wake you up faster than (coffee?). Nope. (Black coffee?) Nope. (Well, what, then??) . A dead skunk in the road!!!! (PEEEEEEEWWWWHEEEEEEWWWW!!!)

Anyway, we arrived on site and no worse for wear, trolled in and armored up for inspection. I received a couple of compliments from some hotel employees on my outfit (Did they say that you looked *Cute*??). NO! They said that they thought I looked really nice (OOOOHHH!) ANYWAY, to continue on: the field of competition was good and there were lots of fighters. It was a standard double-

elimination tourney and I really enjoyed myself. (So, how'd ya do, Ari?) Let me tell you, the talent out there amongst Meridian fighters was VERY apparent (So you lost. Right, Ari?). Most of the fighters complained of being slow and out-of-practice because of the holidays and said that they weren't quite up to par (Oh. So ya did okay, right?). But I think that they were underestimating themselves (So, you did lose, didn't you?). GREATLY underestimating themselves (HE LOST!!!). Okay, so I got beat. I was *gonna* say so. I did manage to get a double kill in the second round, so that I got to fight a third time...that sorta made up for how short the first round was. I would like to congratulate all the fighters and especially the two gentlemen that I got to fight. It was certainly an honor. I would like to point out that the King, while not actually competing himself, got to stand in for a couple of fighters who needed to be elsewhere for their second match. He was impressive. MOST impressive. I also want to mention that Sir Gryphon was an EXCELLENT field marshal. He ran a tight ship. The tourney was won by the Warlord of Glaedenfeld - that's his title, not his name. I never caught that...sorry (Not payin' attention again, huh?).

The second tournament had a Wrestling theme to it. Well, better make that *Wrasslin'*. Yes, sirree, it was like the WWF in the SCA. And you can imagine what it was like: tabards, devices, titles, and chivalry were traded in for costumes, props, goofy names and SCHTICK!!! Far be it for us to expect ANY of this in the Society, of course (AHEM...). Oh, sorry. To move on, there were tin - I mean *ten* teams competing in this double elimination tourney, so it was quite a long event. Some of the teams were: Batman and Superman, Dogboy and The Cross, the Greybeards, Ren and Stimpy, and the Killer "E's" (What was *your* team called, Ari?). And the stunts that some of these guys pulled were quite unique (Come on, Ari - we *know* you were in on this. What was your team called?) And that ring girl - Fifi - man, she really turned quite a few heads, too - and not with a headlock, either. In fact, there were all the elements that you'd see on Monday Nite Nitro (Ari,

better tell us, or you'll be cleaning the privies for the next five tourneys!!!!) Oh yes, and uh, I competed in it, too (*Big surprise, there, Ari*) and my team was called...(Yes???)...Black and Blue, the Bruise Brothers (Oh man, that is so weak) Hey, I had to come up with a name at the last second. Being spontaneously creative isn't always that easy (it's not *that* hard, though). Anyway, there were quite a few dramatic matches (So how'd your team do, Ari?) and, of course, everyone really camped it up. In fact, it got so comy there that we had crows circling overhead (Ya'll lost, right?) and there was also an interesting little interteam grudge match between the team of Ren & Stimpy over just exactly who was Ren and who was Stimpy (They lost.). Well, hold on - I'm getting to that (So, ya won??) Well, yes. I mean know - er, *no* that is. Actually, we lost the first match to Dogboy & The Cross, but we beat the Killer "E's". Now, we had a lot of help from our manager, Rwydwen and from Fifi the ring girl. She distracted Sir Gryphon, who was the referee. Now, my partner was a gentle named Syth who had just moved to Meridies and he was GOOD. He really new, I mean *knew* how to fight out there. And yes, I hammed it up for the match (Not *you*, Ari...). Ya shoulda seen my swan dive as I pinned one of the Killer "E's" to win the second match. Sir Gryphon gotta kick out of it (So, then what happened? They lost!) Well, we had to fight Dogboy & The Cross again (They lost.) and...we lost... (Ha!! Told ya!!) But we had fun - and the best part of the day was watchin' Fifi and a female accomplice run off with the championship belts!

There were also some really cool classes taught. They included dancing, period gardening, herbs, and I attended a really neat class on siege weapons. (Ya know, Ari, you're *really* startin' to become a *Real Stick Jock*). There was good shopping to be done as there were several fine merchants there. Shoppers had a wide variety to choose from, ranging from books, jewelry, garb, and weapons to musical instruments and CD's.

Court that evening moved quickly and was fun to see. Several A.O.A.'s were given as well as a Cygnet and other awards. Sir Gryphon appointed a gentle as a Man of

Arms for his Household. THL Alexander Ravenscroft acted as Herald for much of Court and made us laugh as often as he could. Let me tell ya, the KING was cool. He looked awesome up there and you could tell that he was havin' a good time. He's got a HUGE grin and it livens up everything.

After court, there was a puppet show for the goslings. Glaedenfeld did a good job all day with the goslings. Then came the FEAST!! I was BLOATED afterward. The Lord of Misrule was present, of course and one of the cuter things that he did was to make the Warlord of Glaedenfeld come up and sing and dance to "I'm a Little Teapot." The fighters doing the Can-can routine was fun to watch, two - I mean to - TOO, that is. There was also a fund-raiser for the College of Heraldry; it was an auction in which participants could buy cream pies and then deliver it to the face of.... THL Alexander Ravenscroft!! Alex got pied - repeatedly. Then, just as the last pie was about to slap Alex in the face, the King stood up and asked if "The King might...make his OWN suggestion for a target?" Sir Gryphon, standing out on the feast floor, froze and stared really hard at the King. The King then suggested that the next...recipient...of the pie be...the Lord of Misrule. Sir Gryphon appeared at ease. Well, the Lord of Misrule got his. And the College of Heraldry got there - I mean their cash, so it was a good knight - I mean night.

The knight's - I mean nite's - I mean - **OH TA HECK WITH IT!!** The evening ended with a shadow puppet play with a tongue-in-cheek warning to all "Rhinos" followed by dancing. Glaedenfeld put on a terrific 12th Night (Hey! He got it right!!) and I look forward to tryin' to go to their next event. Good Show, guys. I had a lot of fun!! Til later, I'll see ya'll down the road.

Carry on,

Ari



From The Seneschal

The Laird Davoc Walkere sendeth unto the people of Vulpine Reach greetings.

March?? How did it get to be March?? Omigod!! That means Colligium Siennach is less than two months away! Well, at least

I'm not in charge of planning anything for the event.... The plans I've heard about sound really good and I'm looking forward to it.

I got a chance to meet Their Highnesses this past weekend; they seem to be really neat people. I hope to get the chance to get to know them better. Maybe they will come to Tourney of the Foxes, since they won't be able to come to Collegium Siennach due to attending their own baronial event.

Well, I'm going to keep it short this month since I'm having to do this without my electronic scribe - which is sick right now. So, have fun, but be careful.

I remain yours in service to Meridies, the Crown, and the people of this Shire.

Davoc

Travels: Meridian Maneuvers

This was the worst event and the best event! The directions to the site missed some really crucial directions and if the SCA signs were up at all, we couldn't see them because of the torrential downpour and blacker-than-pitch night. It rained like it rains when you just pull off the road because you want to wait for it to blow over. But, we did not pull off, hoping to drive out of it. The rain, unfortunately, was more clever than we were and wanted to go to the event with us, so it followed us there - for three hours...through "Deliverance" country. But, stalwart travelers are we, so we trudged onward.

We found all our fellow wet travelers enjoying the ambiance of the main hall, since that really was the best place. As I enjoyed the company of Duke Boru, I heard His Majesty call out, "Spooky Chick!" (which is some unfortunate soubriquet that has been tagged on me by the lovely House of the Great Auk - and don't even think of importing it up here...) and I collapsed in pain against His Grace and let out a pained wail. His Majesty smiled mischievously and said, "Oh, I thought you liked that, Kate." Honestly, I can't remember who started calling me that, but I was told it had something to do with MST3K. Sir Conal MacDalc started in with the fun as well, and I was concerned that he didn't like me, but I was assured otherwise. But, he still looks at me in a concerned way every now and

then. However, I had seen him do his "lizard" impersonation with Cajun roast beef at Gulf Wars last year, so I am sure I am not alone in "odd-ness." (I only hope His Majesty is chuckling with mirth at this visual...) Anyway, back to the event.

I didn't sleep well Friday night because the beds had springs that cracked like shotguns every time someone shifted. I was also excited to be back at an event after a cold and slow winter. Sir Robert had reported earlier that the English stayed awake before battles, so I thought I might be fine. But then, he had also reported that the Romans slept before battle (which is one of the many reasons he admires them), so I wasn't sure any more. Then we did not get a wake-up call - but as I mentioned - I didn't sleep well, so I was up anyway. Oh! Did I mention we had a private room for this site, in a cabin with about 50 bunks? There are advantages to hanging out with the House of the Great Auk!

Basic synopsis: much fighting, many people came out, it involved taunting ("Your sister - the other white meat!") and heckling ("Louder!! And funnier!!"). I took a bladework class with Lady Theodora and I enjoyed seeing Lord Michael Lazarus, Sir Harold, Sir Conal and Countess Isabel, Earl Bryce, Lord Shaltar, Sir Gryphon and his lovely lady, along with many others. Haven't met these people yet? I'll introduce you if you want. And I also got sunburnt on half my face. I really don't know how...

Now, we fast forward to Court. You know, they say that as soon as you give up and just relax, they call you up. It's true! I decided to not sit on the edge of my seat. I figured, well, I've only been in a year, I didn't do much (the scroll does say, "diverse great efforts..."), so I'll just relax. Wrong. The next thing I knew, the Herald called me up and His Majesty asked me if I had anything for Him. I never realized that giving beads to the King in Court might have repercussions! So, my answer was a safe, "Well, no, not right now, Your Majesty." He smiled (as He is wont to do) and said, "Well, I have something for you." Then He named my work for *Fox Tales* [Ed. Note: Alright, you readers. Now you see what can come from contributing articles to this here rag! I toja His Majesty

reads it, didn't I? But do you listen to me? Noooooooo.] and Her Majesty added, "and she's helpful!" and I really don't remember much more because I was sobbing madly by this point. An interesting point: you know how after someone gets an award Their Majesties say something in private to them? I always thought it was advice or thanks or something useful. I now know what they say - well, at least what they said to me. His Majesty's first words after giving me my AOA and putting the circlet on my head were, "Hey! Looks like that thing will fit!" And Her Majesty's first words were, "it's adjustable." I find this very amusing.

The nicest thing, though, about having an AOA is all the nice people who came up afterwards and said, "Congratulations! You have deserved this for a long time," or, "It couldn't have happened to a nicer person!" My favorite comment was from His Highness Padruig, who said that He wanted to give me the AOA Himself, and was hoping Their Majesties would wait so He could give it to me at Black Gryphon.

Other bits: drumming was very nice. There were at least ten strong drummers there and several other fill-ins who got to play. I enjoyed playing drums with His Excellency Bryce and His Highness Padruig, and watching Countess Isabel dance to her husband's drumming. This is a wonderful world!

- Lady Kate the Green

Research: Medieval and Modern Medicinal Herb Use

A huge number of plants were used as medicines in the Middle Ages. Some of those plants have been since discarded as ineffective, others are now considered much too dangerous to be used by any but the most highly trained herbalists. But a perhaps surprisingly large number of these herbs have had their traditional uses upheld by modern scientific studies. This was quite a coup for our ancestors, who had only trial and error to base their prescriptions on (mixed, admittedly, with a number of superstitions and weird-sounding-to-us ideas of how the body functioned and disease and healing occurred!). I've listed a few of these herbs below, with both some of the period and modern uses:

Garlic - Period: Pliny the Elder used it for "changes of water and residence", asthma, coughs, and internal parasites. Culpeper lists many uses - those included - and says, "This was anciently accounted the 'poor-man's treacle,' it being a remedy for all diseases."¹

Modern: Scientific studies have shown that garlic can kill the bacteria that causes food poisoning, bladder infections, flu, tuberculosis and has been used to treat meningitis, athlete's foot, and vaginal yeast infections.²

Yarrow - Period: Gerard used it for swellings "of the privy parts", Culpeper for wounds, bleeding, inflammations and ulcers and "the piles" (hemorrhoids).³

Modern: Used as a styptic (wound closer). The wound should be well-cleaned before use or it may actually close dirt in the wound.³ Studies have identified two chemicals that spur blood coagulation, as well as some that are antiseptic and anti-inflammatory, with some pain-relieving action. Also, one that relaxes smooth muscles, making it useful as a digestive aid and possibly for menstrual cramps.⁴

Plantain - Period: It was highly thought-of for the digestion, internal bleedings, wounds, lung problems, jaundice, and ulcerated sores.¹

Modern: Wound healing. Few studies have been done yet, but those find it strongly anti-inflammatory, with a number of factors that stimulate the immune system.² Leaves are mashed and applied as a poultice or as part of a salve. Seeds are used as an effective bulk laxative (known as psyllium, the active ingredient in MetamucilTM, etc.). Some studies indicate that the seeds may reduce cholesterol and blood sugar.⁴

Calendula - Period: Culpeper used it for smallpox and measles, as well as hot swellings on the skin, to "comfort the heart" in drinks and possets and as part of a plaster for fevers.

Modern: Wound healing. European studies have shown calendula to accelerate healing and to be an antibacterial, antiviral, and immunostimulatory.¹ The flowers are used mostly in salves and skin lotions and occasionally in soothing teas.

Stinging Nettle - Period: Popular as a potherb. The fibers of the mature stalks were sometimes used like linen.

Modern: European herbalists use it as a diuretic, astringent, a treatment for anemia (has high iron content) and styptic, among other uses. The diuretic activity has been upheld in studies done in Germany. It also shows promise in treating certain types of prostate problems. Many people still use the sting as a folk treatment for arthritis pain.¹ It is often used for sinus and allergy problems, even though there is little documentation to support it.

Fennel Seed - Period: Very popular! The Anglo-Saxons used it as both a spice and a digestive aid. Charlemagne ordered it planted in all of his gardens. Edward I's household used more than eight pounds each month! It was one of Hildegard of Bingen's favorite herbs. She also used it for digestion, as well as for colds or flu, the heart, and "good body odor".¹ Culpeper, as well, found it useful as a digestive and anti-flatulent and for increasing milk and menstrual flow in women.

Modern: The seeds are used as a digestive aid, diuretic, fever reducer, and anti-flatulent.^{1,2} It has held up well for these traditional uses in various studies done in the Middle East and Europe. Other studies lend credence to its reputation for promoting both menstruation and milk production. It is also sometimes used as an expectorant and ingredient in cough remedies.

Rosemary - Period: Shakespeare's recommendation of rosemary "for remembrance" was not an isolated instance. Culpeper used it for "dullness of the mind" and for memory, as well as for head and chest complaints, dim eyes tooth and gum pain, heart problems, and digestion, among other problems.¹

Modern: It has been shown to be as good a food preservative as the chemicals BHA and BHT. It is also useful for nasal and chest complaints, and yes, it may indeed help memory by protecting cells from free radicals!

- Lady Diana Fiona O'Shera

Notes:

1. Complete Herbal and English Physician, Enlarged, by Nicholas Culpeper, 1652, reprinted 1814, London ISBN 0-916638-20-0, Meyerbooks
2. "Herbs for Health," Nov./Dec., 1996

Interweave Press

3. "The Herb Companion," June/July, 1996 Interweave Press

4. The Healing Herbs by Michael Castleman, Rodale Press, 1991

Movie Review: *Ivanhoe* (1982)

"You're about to see a story of Bold Knights and young maidens. A story of Love, Hatred, and Prejudice. Though our story is old, our Love, Hatred, and Prejudice are New."

And that's the way this movie starts out. Yes, it's...IVANHOE! And no, I'm not slacking off on my JOB. I'm not doing like some preacher who realizes that it's Saturday night at 10 p.m. and he hasn't got a sermon for the next morning, so he drags up some OLD sermon and hopes that nobody notices...again. This is the *remake* of *Ivanhoe*. It was made in 1982 and was made in England.

Now, the story line is pretty much the same as in the original *Ivanhoe*. Some variance takes place, but there's more of a skimming over of some aspects of the story to give more attention to OTHER aspects of the movie. It's kinda hyped up in a Blue-blooded British sorta way.

Imagine, a HYPED up English film. I didn't know that Brits got hyped over anything except the Crown and the Royal Navy....

So, if you've seen the *first* movie, you know the story line - so I'm not gonna waste space *retellin'* it to ya. That's a waste of space. As I've stated before, I write reviews, not stories. BUT, to continue...with the review.

This remake doesn't, well, it doesn't suck...it isn't *that* bad. Now, it's not that great either, but if you see it and rent it, I don't think you'll hate it, because it is an okay movie. It doesn't just trample all over the first *Ivanhoe* movie, either. It's a DECENT modern remake of an old movie. It's NOT some Hollyweird remake with a bunch of big name stars to be a draw at the BOX OFFICE.

But what is NOT this remake, is FUN! The first *Ivanhoe* was FUN. It was a little cheezy and kinda far reaching, but it was FUN!! And one other observation: I can fight better than THESE guys did!! The

fighting sequences are totally lame. There's nothing majestic about this remake. It's just plain, well, plain. It's just kinda...there. The clothes are good; it *does* look more authentic than the original. In fact, I think that any member of the Authenticity Police would probably love this movie.

So, in my OPINION, the movie is a good movie, it leaves out the most IMPORTANT element, FUN. But those guys sure can't FIGHT!

In Your Viewing Service,

- Lord Ari Williamsson

P.S. If you're wonderin' why there's so many capitalized words in this review....

MADE YA LOOK!!



From the Chronicler

Okay, so Fox Talca is late again.... Once more, I apologize. I'm afraid I have been a teensy bit busy. Hopefully, the train's back on the rails again and maybe I can settle back down to publishing on-time everytime for a time. I do want to thank Lady Diana and Lady Kate for the wonderful notes on the Herb class and the terrific report on Meridian Manuevers - complete with her narrative on receiving her AOA. I agree that she richly deserves it and personally feel that she will honor His Majesty's wisdom in presenting it to her.

Actually, I did get a tear in my eye when I read her narrative and remembered my own name being called in Court the first time. The "What? ME???" thought, plus the mental review (similar to being called to the principal's office in elementary school) of "did I tick somebody off or something?" as I "peeled steel" and never noticed the knowing grins of those who had recommended me. Then there were that LONING walk up the aisle to Her Majesty Queen Heather's throne, the barely-remembered-in-time-reverence outside The Presence, and the kneeling before Her Majesty as the Herald mangled "Toxophilite" (really, it's pronounced like it's spelled).

Someone at a recent event commented that, "You never forget the King and Queen you get an award from." I couldn't agree more - and neither could Lady Kate. Nor

could anybody else who has either a circlet or some sort of "dangly" around their neck. That's why it is our duty as members of the Society to write letters of recommendation.

No doubt you know somebody, like Kate, that has worked hard on the Society's behalf - whether it has been toiling in the kitchen, running themselves silly making sure fighters drink enough water at a tourney, washing dishes for others after feast, or has helped when they should've been having fun. Those gentles are the backbone of the Society and deserve the recognition of an Award of Arms (if they don't already have one). However, the only way they'll ever be even considered for one is if you explain that to the Crown in a letter.

Awards are given at the will of the Crown; the Crown has to know who is deserving, though. That's your job - YOU are acting as the eyes and ears of the Crown.

There are a few general guidelines to writing award recommendations. Include the person's mundane name, SCA name and membership number (if you know it), the group's name, and your name and address. Write your recommendation for a particular award you feel the person qualifies for (ask to see a copy of Kingdom Law for a list of the Kingdom awards). Be specific and to-the-point. Use examples of the person's work and a list of events and demos that he's attended/helped at. More than one King has had His memory jogged with that kind of letter ("Oh, yeah! I remember him. He also helped me by carrying my lady's basket before I became King!"). Above all, don't recommend someone, "Because he's a really neat guy." He may be a "really neat guy," but unless the Crown knows he has those qualities that mark him as someone of noble attitudes and actions, he won't get an award for that reason alone. As I said before, be specific and to-the-point.

"But I've only been with the SCA for about a year - I really shouldn't write recommendations yet, should I?"

Okay, if you feel you don't know anybody well enough to "write them up," then don't. You've got to feel comfortable and confident that the recommendation is appropriate. On the other hand, if there is somebody who regularly distinguishes himself in his behavior and attitudes, and

you - as a newcomer - can tell he has "the right stuff," recommend him. Writing letters of recommendation isn't limited to the grey-haired foxes in our group; it's open to everybody.

Finally, here are a few words on "award-etiquette."

Don't tell somebody they have been recommended. Just as you wouldn't want to spoil a surprise birthday party, you wouldn't want to spoil that initial jaw-dropping shock of being called in Court for the very first time. Besides - just because a person is recommended doesn't necessarily mean that they will be given the award (the award is given "at the will of the Crown," remember?) Perhaps the King just hasn't heard enough good stuff about the recommendee yet.

Don't give recommendation letters to the Crown at events - mail them to their homes. This is only common sense: They have enough to keep track of without having to not-lose a recommendation letter. Also, be sure that both King and Queen have a copy of the letter; many times, they live in different cities.

Hand-written letters are best. Not only do they have the ambience of an official document, but the Crown notices that you have invested some of *yourself* in the recommendation process and have made it a more "personal" matter (remember how insulted you felt, the first time you received a letter from a large company you'd never even heard of that started, "Dear friend"?).

Finally, remember that little things like proper sentences, neat hand-writing and correct spelling will *help you get your point across*. This is particularly important considering the strange spellings some of our names have! For instance, if you recommended Larz Kaputnik for an AOA, your friend Laris Kaputchien might be somewhat put out that his name isn't spelled correctly on the scroll. There might even be a "Larz Kaputnik" that you unwittingly recommended for an award (while you were *really* trying to recommend Laris!). It isn't the King's fault that He couldn't read what you had written.

I remain in service to the Society, Meridies, and You:

Jas. Tox.

News Shorts:

Shire Members Involved in Shootings

On January 26, Lord Malcolm McLachlan and Lord Ari Williamson were shot with a camera during a training bout at fighter practice. No injuries were reported aside from bruises on the back from well-wishers who had seen the photo in the January 27 *Chattanooga News-Free Press* newspaper - it was in color and looked really neat!

Also, in the March 2 *Dayton Herald-News* was a black-and-white photo showing four students and Shire members Lady Catherine and Mistress Lijsbeth (see front page story).

Demo: Hickory Valley Christian School

On January 31, the Vulpine Reach Road Show presented an educational demo at the Hickory Valley Christian School. Road Show regulars Mistress Lijsbeth, Lady Diana, Lord James, and Lord Dorin were joined by Lord Ari and Lady Catherine. We presented our program to two classes of fourth-graders.

Game Review: Monty Python and the Quest for the Holy Grail

"God be praised," the 7th Level folks have done it again! Their first effort at Montymania was *Monty Python's Complete Waste of Time*, a CD ROM game of questionable virtue encompassing the more, ahem, *mundane* aspects of the British comedy troupe. For SCA'ers, though, the pinnacle of silliness is, naturally enough, that *motion picture* of questionable virtue, *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* (and don't sit there and act like you've never heard of it - I have *heard* you quote lines from it! One of these days, Ari, you're gonna have to do the review...)

In *The Quest for the Holy Grail*, you're called upon to undertake the tasks leading up to laying your hands on the Holy Grail. The recommended minimum system for *Quest* is a 486/33, 8 Meg RAM, 256 color monitor and card, and a 2X CD-ROM drive. By the way, the game has mature themes - under 18 need not apply.

Game play is interesting, since the rules just give you the basics on loading and starting the game, along with such gems of

wisdom as, "IMPORTANT: Do not start this program without a computer! Starting this program without a computer could result in serious injury!"

As for any useful game-playing information, well, forget it. The booklet does have a web-site address for Cheat Codes (for those of you who are afraid to think for yourselves, like me), but don't expect a whole lot of real help. This is one computer game where the delight is in the discovery - and 7th Level really wants you to be delighted. *Very* delighted. The address does provide you with important information, but using it and figuring out how to use what it gives you are left up to you (and really, wouldn't you rather have it that way?).

If you get the chance to get this game away from me and try it - or better yet, buy your own (mine was a Christmas gift from Lady Caoilfionn's father - and she's about to kill him, I think, for giving it to me...), my advice is to break out the coconuts, look for a sign from God, head for Huge Tracts of Land, and prepare to go not-so-quietly crazy until the Grail is yours.

P.S. - You Rhinos out there (you know who you are) will get an absolute blast from playing the subplot game, *Knights In Kombat*. My advice to you is to play as the Black Knight rather than King Arthur.

Life in the SCA:

Gossiping Observations

Hello! I know I am not the minister of children, but I was recently at an event that implemented a rule change concerning children and I thought you all would like to know about it. Lady Theodora will have more about this later - I suspect in Pop. Chiv. - but I wanted to give advance notice to those members with children, so they would not be surprised at events.

The most important part of the rule change is that children under 12 must be in the company of an adult at all times and children over 12 must be either with an adult or paired up with another child over 12. I think it is important to note that this rule was carefully discussed with other parents who bring children to events and those who have traveled to or lived in other kingdoms.

Now, I realize that this could put a crimp

in your weekend, but ultimately it is for the safety of your child. It is also not designed for you to have to give up your duties that you volunteered for. You can find another person who is responsible to tend your child for the event, or you can leave them at home with a responsible adult. The way I understood the rule was that the adult on-site did not have to be a parent to the child.

Now, here are some thoughts on the matter: You may trust your child to be alert and responsible and may trust other SCAdians to be mindful of your child and to mean him or her well. In reality, this may not occur. You will win no bonus points if you are the feaster and everything was tasty, quick and hot - but someone else has to extricate your child from that hole they didn't see, rescue them from being lost, or simply have to tell him or her to get off the fighting field for the twelfth time. Let's face it - fighters have a hard enough time seeing and hearing as it is without worrying about tripping over your child...even off the field. And yes, it is inconvenient to go with your child to the port-a-castles at Gulf Wars all week long. It is more inconvenient to not have them come back because they have gotten into some trouble and then have to search for them for an hour. I know even the best behaved child can get distracted by a puppy, another child, or an adult who does not mean well. Now, you might be saying, "Such adults don't exist in the SCA," but that is a fairy tale. I know of several adults who have actually been warned to stop talking to children or that children have been warned about them, because there have been problems. Really.

I have always preferred SCA children to other children because generally they look out for others, are helpful, and know how to keep out of the way of trouble. However, these are all traits that must be taught them, and reinforced by the SCA community. You will be doing no favors to anyone of you drop your untrained child on the community at-large and go off to have your fun. Remember, while we generally all act *in loco parentis* to our smaller members, do not test this generosity by abusing it. A mild inconvenience for you and your child is nothing in comparison to ruining an event for everyone by having an unruly child or

worse, one who goes home in an ambulance.

- Lady Kate the Green

Bardica: A Sailor's Mistress

Don Nikolai Grigorovich Nabokov

When once I was a younger man,
I chased all kinds of girls.
Then once, I stood upon the sand
And chanced upon your curls.

The wind was blowing hard that day,
But calmed as I drew near.
And as I gazed across the bay,
Your voice came to my ear.

You told me that which I must do,
Were I to earn your love.
And so I vowed to follow you,
By all the gods above.

So follow you was what I did,
And months grew into years.
Yet still, your face from me you hid,
No words to calm my fears.

I broke my vow to follow you,
Your service I did leave.
And chose a land to travel to,
My freedom to retrieve.

Yet still I hear your siren song
Sigh softly in my ears,
Which makes me doubt if I was wrong
To listen to my fears.

The years have gone, and left me old,
My days at sea are past.
No girls to chase, no longer bold,
My dear, you were the last.

My thoughts before my final sleep,
On what you mean to me,
Love of my life, a friend to keep,
My mistress is the sea.

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to those of you who have contributed to the March edition of Fox Tales:

Lord Ursus Grim Bekky Batchelder
Baron William Blackfox
Lady Kate the Green
Lord Ari Williamson
Laird Davoc Walkere
Lady Diana Fiona O'Shera
Don Nikolai Grigorovich Nabokov
Lady Caoilfionn Caomhanach

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 Cockercil, 375 - 6760) Engraving, Wood carving
Mistress Lijsbeth Tijss 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 Egelina Rabbette (Rabblt Kadrach, 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

At her request, Lady Annastasia Volkova's name has been removed from the Talent Directory.

Fox Tales

The Newsletter of the Shire of Vulpine Reach
c/o Jim Long, HCR 65, Box 35 Dunlap, TN 37327



**NEED 'backpage'
art!!**