

The Bard's Banner

Winter
AS XLIII



Feast of St. Crispin's, Burning Alan, and more...

The Bard's Banner; Volume 1, Issue 2

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This publication shall recognize those that submit articles, photos, etc. You won't be paid for your submission, but you will have the thanks of myself and our readers.

If you find you need to contact me over something herein, please send an email to:
kj2mill@lakescom.net

Lastly, this publication is meant for the enjoyment of all; share it amongst yourselves and your friends. At the end of the day, if I've made someone smile, I've done my job.

-Piers Lakewood (Kevin Miller)

Welcome!



(The humble Editor and his much better half!)

Hello everyone, and welcome again to this, the second issue of the Bard's Banner. The season of Yuletide is upon us, and we here at the Banner are reminded that it is oft better to give than receive. Luckily, I have received much help this issue, thus I can give thanks to those who have submitted articles and otherwise for all to peruse and enjoy.

Thanks once again to Wlfryd of Leedes for his article on wine making, and to Tewel for another set of medieval book reviews. To Hjordis, a big thank you for the photos that grace both the cover and the St. Crispin's article, and thanks be to Serena for photos of Burning Man. And last but certainly not least, thank you to Ardwyad Iorwerth for his filk that starts off our initial installment of the Poet's Corner.

As ever, if you wish to include something of interest in this, our newsletter, please contact me at:
kj2mill@lakescom.net

-Piers Lakewood, Editor

Tir Bannog Business

SHIRE MEETING NOTES DEC. 6

(Present: His Lordship Tewel Gover, Her Ladyship Betha of Dawlish, His Lordship Liam Dughlas, Her Ladyship Josephine Blackthorn (via webcam), Lord Piers Lakewood, Lady Alys Lakewood and Lord Nikolaas d'Anvers).

1) Officer's Reports: Exchequer Tewel reported we are in the black overall between our two events (Fields of Gold and St. Crispin's) with good attendance at Fields of Gold and slightly less in attendance than expected for St. Crispin's. Last numbers available from the bank reports we are about \$4660 in the Shire's account..

2) Herald Alys reported that one Shire citizen's names was returned for more documentation, followed by his device application, another Shire citizen's device was returned for an art rework and the third's device went through. No word on the Penwalas name and device as of yet.

3) Branch Rapier Marshal Liam reported practices are ongoing [with a short break over Yuletide break - ed.].

4) Chronicler Piers reported deadline for the next Bard's Banner is December 13th. There was a discussion held on making the Banner publicly accessible, with Web Minister Nikolaas promising to address the problem as soon as feasible.

New Business:

1) Autocrat Josephine discussed the possibility of adding a theme to Fields of Gold for this year and then raised the possibility of a more kid friendly site. This was discussed and decided further exploration would be needed on this possibility (plus the addition of the advisory board's input as ultimately the board would decide on an actual infrastructure changes or improvements).

Josephine then asked if there was anyone the Shire members would be interested in formally inviting to

the event –several were mentioned and Josephine added that she would do up formal invitations and have them sent out.

2) The Barony of Penwalas was discussed and, as the device isn't going to be heard of until at least February, further discussion was tabled. Exploration and research continues.

3) Bidding for future crown events was placed on the back burner as focus would need to be put into gaining baronial status.

4) The possibility of a Medieval faire was discussed for the Fields of Gold site (part of the making of the educational centre a royal sanctuary was the addition of the possibility of a sanctioned faire) and it was decided to further explore this with the understanding of the differences between an event and the faire (notably the faire participants would be performers for a non period garbed public) so insurance options would be explored as well as the myriad of other legal and commercial ramifications. The possibility of such an event adding to our potential baronial travel fund coffers was greeted with cautious optimism. Other assets mentioned for a possible medieval faire would be increasing our local profiles. Seneschal Nikolaas mentioned if we did it the best idea would be have it taking place every 2 years to help alleviate event burnout.

5) Discussion was then had about the possibility of the Rogue's Revel event being reprised for the spring (well before Penguin's Crusade) and using this year's St. Crispin's site (if possible) to host the event. The original reprised Rogue's Revel had been planned to utilize the once a year deal on a hall in Houston but the conditions have since changed and that option has been closed to us. Discussion was had on making it an educational event with several offering to contact teachers (or volunteering to teach) but, as of yet, no one has volunteered to autocrat so the possible event is still in the early discussion phase. [Rumour has it that Sigehere's name was graciously brought forth by some

in attendance; however, the motion was apparently squashed when it was determined that he actually was not present, and not just sent out of the room for the voting! -Ed.] We will return to this subject at the first quarter meeting 2010.

Meeting was adjourned.

-meeting notes submitted by Nikolaas d'Anvers

Burning Man

On the 10th of October, Boar Mountain Hold held it's second annual Burning Man Social. Despite the unseasonable cold, 42 friends and neighbors showed up to brave the weather, share stories and feast.



(The Burning Man, including sacrifice! - photo by Lady Serena)



(sunny but cold... gather 'round the fire!)

The highlight of the day was the "Light the Burning Man" archery shoot. Just under 20 archers vied for the vaunted prize of setting the Burning Man alight once darkness fell. Two flaming arrows were up for grabs, and after 3 rounds of shooting, the newcomer known only as "Dave" and Yoshimara held the top spots.



(Archers on the line)

After the shoot, more tales were shared, and friends caught up on each other's travels and travails whilst the day's shadows grew long. Rumours of an armored maniac showing up to challenge the crowd remain just that, rumours.... Before it seemed likely, the afternoon rushed by and it was time for supper.

While the pig was being dug up (the main dish for the feast was seasoned, wrapped and buried in the fire the night before), Lady Alys led the upper site crew in getting the rest of the food out and ready for supper. More fires were set, the pig was reclaimed from the earth, and everyone headed up the hill into the deepening gloom for an incredible variety of food and drink. Mulled wine was shared (along with more than a few unprintable stories), and before we knew it, it was time to head back down for the main event.

After a few false starts, a few laughs and curses, some quick fixes and a mighty Huzzah!, the Burning Man finally was lit.. More mulled wine was shared, and the remainder of the chilly night was spent by the fires until the last few hardy souls retired to their dens.



(He burns! He burns! - photo by Lady Serena)

Lets Make WINE

(Announcing FoGEC Red)

-by Wlfryd of Leeds

Wine... not that ugly sound unhappy people make, but the juice of joy that so many revelers seem to enjoy at festive events.



(The vines bear fruit!)

This past season the Fields of Gold Educational Center was lucky enough to procure some grape bearing vines

from the central interior of the Principality. These grapes were harvested in October, just before the frost. Tart grapes are more acidic and will produce a dry wine once fermented. Green grapes make white wine, red grapes make pink wine and purple grapes make red wine. The best part of wine making is that grapes have a natural yeast present in the skins which means the juice will ferment naturally without having to add yeast.



(Not a bad harvest for first year vines...)

The first step is to crush the grapes. This releases the juices and activates the yeast. Since I had only a few grapes we added a 28 day wine kit to make a Shiraz wine. I started the kit in the normal way and added in the FoGEC Red grapes. After about two weeks in a warm place the wine will normally have finished its primary fermentation and will be ready to be racked off. Racking will separate the lees, or heavy sediments from the wine and remove the skins, stems and seeds from the wine. When I racked the wine it stimulated the yeasts and the wine began to ferment all over again.

The second step allows for secondary fermentation. This step will allow any remaining lighter sediments to settle out of the wine and the juice will take on a more full bodied flavour. If you are using a hydrometer and measuring the specific gravity you could at this point calculate the approximate alcoholic percentage of the wine (usually about 12% by volume with my wines).

After about three weeks at this stage the wine is now ready to go to clearing and finishing. This final stage removes all remaining sediments from the wine without filtration.

The clearing and finishing stage in period would see a clarifying agent such as oxblood poured through the wine. The platelets in the blood adhere to any sediments suspended in the wine and settle them out to the bottom. Today we use bentonite, a fancy name for volcanic dust, and gelatin; they work something like concrete and adhere to any suspended particles in the wine and settle them out. Once the stabilizer, preservatives and potassium sulphate are added to a modern wine kit the wine is allowed to sit for at least another two weeks and some times up to a year before being bottled.

At this time the FoGEC Red is nearing the end of secondary fermentation and is ready to be racked off. I hope to have the finished product available for Fields of Gold this summer and plan to enter a bottle in the brewing competition at St. Crispin's next fall. You will probably have noticed that from mid October to now [this was written on the 8th of December – Ed.] is more than the 28 days on a normal wine kit. I have found that giving the wine longer in each of the stages produces a much better quality and clarity of wine. I have also adapted the recipe from what the normal wine kit calls for and removed some additives and added other steps. If you would like to discuss recipes or open a dialogue on wine making contact wolfrheadofleeds@yahoo.ca

Feast of St. Crispin's

On October 24th, the Shire of Tir Bannog held its annual Feast of St. Crispin's. This year the event was held in Houston under the auspices of local autocrat, HL Liam Dughlus. As is the norm for late fall in the shire, the weather was cold but clear, which was perfect for the tournaments to be held outside.

The morning crew arrived early to have the doors open and coffee ready by 10:00 am. A slow but steady pace of arrivals kept the morning lively, with old friends renewing acquaintances, and new friends being met.



(Lady Serena, Feastocrat's aide, ready to serve!)

Just before noon the Heavy and Rapier fighters began gearing up and being inspected for their tournies. While the Heavy fighters were vying for prizes, the Rapier combatants were gearing up at a run for the Championship of Tir Bannog. The outgoing Champion, HL Liam Dughlus, graciously marshaled over the combat whilst Lady Sidney offered once again to run the lists.



(Liam the Autocrat and Alys the Feastocrat discuss the main course before the Rapier Tournament)

On the Heavy side of things, Lord Madyn marshaled the proceedings and HL Betha ran lists. By the early afternoon the two Tournies were underway. The participants fought with great honor, chivalry and dedication during the afternoon, and when the (proverbial) smoke had cleared, Tuathal (of the Wolfpack) claimed the Heavy Prize Tourney, and HL Josephine Blackthorne became the new Rapier Champion of Tir Bannog.



(HL Josephine on her way to claiming the Championship)



(Tuathal and Lord Sigehere vie for the Prize)

After the fighting was over, the action moved inside. This year Lady Alys Lakewood, outgoing A&S Champion, decided to hold both an Official Championship and a non-official Fun competition. The fun Arts & Sciences competition ended up with fifteen entries, an amazing number by all accounts.

Sadly, as the Official Competition received no entries, the judges had to go to the non-official entries to decide which entry best fit the bill for an A&S project. In the end, with careful consideration and meticulous judging, it was determined that the entry of "Smithed tongs, a crafted knife with carved handle, and blade blank" would be the winner, and the A&S Championship was awarded to Tuathal (much to his surprise!).



(the entries in the A&S fun competition)

both to entertain the crowd and to determine a new Bardic champ. There were many fine tales and songs to be had, and in the end the singing of Lady Ysabelle won over the hearts of the judges, and she was proclaimed our new Tir Bannog Bardic Champion! The last award of the night was given out for the Brewing competition, which was given to a surprised Lady Alys Lakewood for her Blackberry Brandy [I had entered the competition for her without her knowledge – Ed.]



(our incredible serving team)

Just before it was mealtime, HL Betha displayed to the crowd the Proclamation that declared the Fields of Gold Educational Site to hereby be a Royal Sanctuary. It was also announced that Lord Henri had won the "Buy an Arrow" archery shoot.

Finally, after all the judging and fighting, it was time for the feast. Rather than go with "in house" servers, it was decided to hire local students to do the serving for the feast, and this job was done quite expertly by five Grade 4 students (and parent helpers) from Twain Sullivan Elementary School in Houston. By all accounts, all three removes were met with great anticipation and appetites. [Editor's note: it was remarked by a few attendees that it was the first time they did not have to use their "Yuk!" bowls... a fitting tribute to the cook indeed!]

With the feast well underway, the Tir Bannog Bardic Championship took center stage between removes,

With the feast done and everyone in a happy state of mind, the floor was cleared for dancing lessons, courtesy of Lady Medb of Cae Mor. From what I witnessed, the dancers were enjoying themselves greatly (even if some of them were somewhat confused), and the onlookers were enjoying the spurts of confusion even more!

Despite all efforts, none of us could stop the merciless marching of time and arrangements were made for bedding down for the evening. Sunday morning was spent gathering gear, saying goodbyes to friends and far travelers, and cleaning up the hall.

Thanks to all those involved in the proceedings: to Liam for offering to be Autocrat and having a smooth run event; to Alys for cooking a wonderful Feast.; to Sigehere, Serena, Tawl, Betha, Medb, Madyn, Ysabelle and Sidony, for being the "What do you need done? Don't worry, I'll handle that" people... you are not

always necessarily thanked for the background jobs, but you are always necessary! Finally, a huge thanks to those who came from both near and far to fight, visit and help us celebrate St. Crispin's. We hope to see you all (and more) next year!

The Bardic Corner

(this "column" will be appearing intermittently in the Bard's Banner, whenever submissions (or my own fevered ramblings) permit)

Tir Bannog

(Filked by Ardwyd Iorwerth)

(Original Music and Lyrics © By Hall & Oates)

We've only come to kill you
We are the killing type
We live up north, We come from Tir Bannog
We live for the kill

We will lure you with friendship and ply you with our
wine

Tomorrow we will kill you
Your sword will lie by your side
It will be our laughter you hear as you fade away
You used to matter
Now you are just another victim of Tir Bannog

Look out here we come
Watch out lads we hack and slash
We will watch you die
We're from Tir Bannog
Look out here we come
Watch out boys we swish and poke
We will watch you die
We're from Tir Bannog

I would just lay down my arms
You haven't got a chance
You can come in ones, or come in force, we will cut
you down
You used to matter
Now you are just another victim of Tir Bannog

Look out here we come
Watch out lads we hack and slash
We will watch you die
We're from Tir Bannog
Look out here we come
Watch out boys we swish and poke
We will watch you die
We're from Tir Bannog!

-Ardwyd Iorwerth

My Love Hath Risen

(by Piers Lakewood)

My love hath risen, and the sun doth wake,
She smiles; the light breaks through the foggy morn
And rests in her arms before flight it takes
To circle the world; a new day is born.

My love's in the field; the animals flock
'Round like sheep yearning to enter the fold;
They orbit her as she sits 'pon a rock
And bask in her warmth to keep from the cold.

My love's to the woods, gathering flowers;
Where she picks, fresh buds swiftly grow and bloom;
She'll use them to decorate our bower
And bring life to the stillness of our room.

My love's by the river, with jars of clay
To baptize and fill with Water of Life;
She'll carry them from the banks and away
From turbulent waters, to Peace from Strife.

My love's by the hearth; the heat of the fire
Rekindles her glow, her warmth and her light;
Her smile rekindles in me my desire
To share with her the sweet mystrie of night.

My love is asleep; the gaze of the moon
Looks down to watch over her resting form;
It waits for her as the world sleeps, for soon
She'll rise again, and the world is reborn.

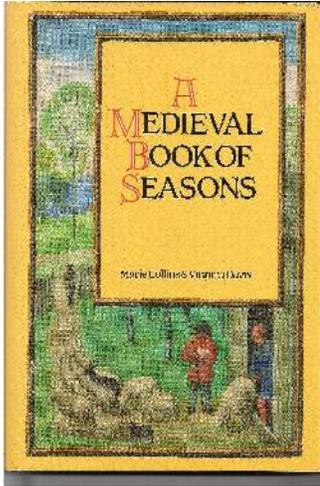
Oct. 11, 2007

The Book Nook

by Tewel Cover

A Medieval Book of Seasons

Marie Collins & Virginia Davis



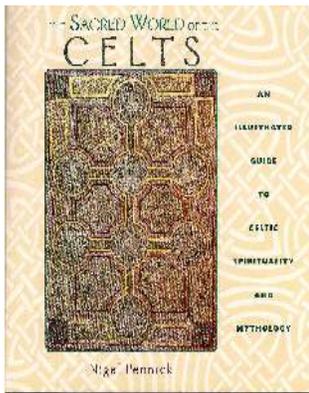
Richly illustrated with pictures from Books of Hours and Psalters this book gives a lot of information about life in the middle-ages. There are lots of bits of information about how the year was broken into seasons more than months. With-in these divisions are the months and what activities were undertaken when. The importance of the church is explored, as is the political hierarchy.

With sections on hunting, fishing, crops, livestock, city life and country living mixed with what was expected of different peoples within the household, this book has something for everyone. You could read through this book from cover to cover, but I find that it is more often dipped into to gain insight into a minor point.

The Sacred World of the Celts

An illustrated guide to Celtic spirituality and Mythology

Nigel Pennick



This is a fascinating book that attempts to strip away the confusion and semi-truths from the stories of the Celtic people. From an interesting introduction to the culture and history of how the Celts became the powerful force they were, through how they shaped

and were shaped by the people they faced, to modern Celtic spirit, this book brings the Celts into focus.

Spirituality was a major factor in Celtic life, from the Druidic to Christianity the beliefs that man, nature and God are intertwined have held firm. But this book also delves into some of the real and not so real heroes and characters that have shaped how the history of the Celts developed. Of course any book on the Celtic people has to include the arts. From the intricate artwork to the decorated tools and household items, the Celtic style is present in all aspects of life. This book leads you to a better understanding of how this culture and its people have endured.

These are just 2 of the over 225 books on the people, arts, rulers, and life in medieval Europe that grace my shelves. If you are looking to research any part of our recreation, please let me know. There is a very good chance that I will have at least one book to point you in the right direction.

Upcoming Events

Finger Food Feast and Social: January 17, Boar Mountain (Burns Lake, BC)
Penguin Crusade: May 1-2, Cae Mor (Kitimat, BC)

