



Tanks for the memory

By our Heavy Metal correspondent

Members of the infamous Buckingham's Wrecking Crew surprised many Mediaeval Watchers at the English Heretic Kirby Hall flagship event during August by capturing a Tiger tank (see *Duke Harry's diary* for a full report on Kirby).

Its careless owners had left it in the care of one lone Union soldier (pictured below on the turret being 'interrogated' by Mistress Wetton) who quickly surrendered it without a fight to its new owners.

A delighted Harry Stafford told *SwanSong*: "I see it becoming a regular back-up to

our usual cannon, *Gwynifer*, at events where greater firepower is needed, such as at sieges. Indeed, Master Phil is looking forward to testing it up the bank at Castle Rising, and has already started polishing it for next season in anticipation."

"Master Horsfield is confident that his black powder licence should cover operation of *Wangbuster One*, as we have named it, and that, if he shifts his mini over a bit and farms out the storage of a few bills, it should fit under the garage rafters nicely."

Upon being asked about a reported order for 150 metres of hessian, the Duke left hurriedly saying he had to "see a man about a duck."



What's in this issue?

On pages 2-5 the camp followers' sweetheart, Duke Harry Stafford, reports on what his retinue have been up to, and who they've been up, in his exclusive diary:

- Kirby Hall.....page 2
- Castle Rising.....page 2
- Warwick Castle....page 3
- Blore Heath.....page 4

On pages 6 and 7 our very own seamstress-to-the-fops, Catherine Wetton, introduces the women to gowns (and the men to the idea of the women being caught naked in public).

Finally, the back page shows that it got completely out of hand, and also has a bit about the feast that everyone should read.

The editorial staff refuse to apologise for the headline.

Thanks to this issue's contributors and happy little helpers: Allan, Amanda, Catherine, Marcus, Phil, Simon, Tee, Tony, the guy from Castle Rising who provided the great pictures, and whoever else provided embarrassing quotes about their mates!

Members of the new 1st Buckingham Tank Regiment standing in front of the armoured wagon captured by the group at Kirby Hall. A group spokesman told SwanSong that this will act as back-up to the reliable Gwynifer during future siege engagements.

(PHOTO: TONY ROE)

Duke Harry's diary

Who have we been beating up this month?

The Wrecking Crew at large

August and September 2001

Kirby Hall
Castle Rising
Warwick Castle
Blore Heath

"How dare you punch me!"

A Dark Age bloke complaining about the style of a repute

"Romanes Eunt Domus!"

Some bloke in a loincloth who was throwing bags of gravel at the Romans

"We will sweep the field with our shield wall"

Dark Age warriors with furrowed brows

"Smash, crack, dent, thwack, smash, splinter"

Dark Age shield wall 'sweeping'

"Was it a bird? was it a plane?"

No it was Phil Howell proving that billmen can fly - into shield walls

Kirby Hall 11th - 12th August

"We will sweep the field with our shield wall"

How quickly the years pass! It seems a mere blink of the eye since my trusted retainers met their comrades in arms at the annual muster of the troops in the fields surrounding one of my private properties, Kirby Hall.

My troops, along with those belonging to my fellow lords, demonstrated their skills by recreating the Battle of Nibley Green in the morning. In the afternoon, I allowed them to play over a ditched earthwork, illustrating the skills of those men who had proudly fought and died at the Battle of Northampton.

There were other displays going on throughout the day by other lords and commanders, demonstrating the skills of the men they commanded. Among the most impressive were the 'American Civil War' people (does anyone actually know who or what or where this American is? I've never heard of it and I'm one of the most educated people in the land) and the World War Two people with their horse-free vehicles. I'm assured that they are most reliable, but I can't see where you put the oats.

The ale tent proved popular with all, being packed all night. Some of my old retainers now in Bills & Bows provided live music - I'm impressed to see that one of my old drummer boys has finally learnt rhythm.

My beloved camp followers did me proud again by claiming rides in some of those strange horse-free vehicles but none were able to claim rides in those metal birds that flew overhead towards the end of each day, I believe to assist in the display done by those men from World War Two. In fact I understand that one of my girls ended up in a 'tank' on the Saturday evening, but she has refused to admit how or why or what happened in order for her to end up in a 'tank', whatever a 'tank' is. She seemed remarkably dry.

Having let the crowd in to the castle to look around, the besieging forces discuss how best to get them out again.

(PHOTO: PUBLIC)

On the final day, my soldiers did me proud again by capturing me a Tiger. They even fought off a 'Union' soldier who claimed that he had captured the beast first. However he released his claim when he met my valiant men. (They say. Personally, I think he saw the women.) I was most displeased, however, that none saw fit to bring me the skin of this legendary beast among beasts. I shall be making representations to my Captayne.

Something to remember: do not annoy any of the camp followers because all of them are skilled practitioners with the kitchen implements as I believe plenty of men from other periods found out towards the end of the final day of the muster.

Castle Rising 18th -19th August



Castle Rising keep. Who dropped the quicklime?

Another successful weekend. Another castle sieged and captured and the women raped and pillaged, even that feisty one with the frying pan who kept insulting my men.

My men were on a raiding mission, rightfully considering that the King had stolen some of my lands, including the area around Castle Rising. One of my captaynes decided to try



to win my favour by pursuing a vendetta against the Stanleys, new 'owners' of my castle, and proceeded to lay siege to it.

The siege started when my men took the incompetent inhabitants of the castle by complete surprise. They quickly overcame the insignificant obstacle provided by the outer bailey and associated earthworks and were soon among a crowd of local people apparently out for a walk. This kind of slack attitude on the part of the castle garrison is reason enough



for me to take back what is rightfully mine. I would never tolerate onlookers and gawpers in my homes, unless of course they were there at my command, say to watch an enemy being flogged.

My soldiers bravely fought across drawbridge and bank. Their training came in very useful in this situation. I'm sure some of the defenders wished that they were on my side



The besieging forces attempt again to carry out their desperate mission to prevent Stan's hose (in gateway, far left) from causing further interference to radios and televisions in East Anglia.

(PHOTO: PUBLIC)

after all, especially seeing as they had to draft in some of their women folk to help defend their castle. Admittedly, some of them were fairly good shots. Their days out on the hunt obviously came in useful. My pride and joy, the goodly cannon *Gwynifer* was wheeled out on occasion to scare the defenders into submission with her powerful smoke.

Many insults were passed between both sides, including the claim that I had to draft in young men to help fight my wars. I DO NOT RECRUIT YOUNG BOYS. All my men have to be at least sixteen years of age before I allow them to join the active ranks.

My men achieved success on both days of the siege but had to beat a hasty retreat when, on the first day, the local militia turned up and came to the aid of the Stanley household. But only after my men had sated their lust with the

raping and pillaging of the women. My men had the goodly sense to disappear for the night and re-emerge once the militia had retreated. The next day the local militia failed to come to the defenders' aid and my men successfully took possession of my castle and taught the defenders a lesson they'll never forget. In fact, I believe that none of them will ever be able to forget anything again, but this is of little consequence.

During the night of Saturday, my men also saw off the back-up defensive troops consisting of local lads who obviously were sympathetic to those trapped inside my Castle and had decided not to relinquish it. It has been reported to me that those lads were obviously not battle trained as at the first potential sign of conflict, they ran off towards the pub, scared. Obviously a sign of a bad lord, if he can't train his troops well enough.

Warwick Castle 25th - 27th August

"Its always a party with the Bucks"

This weekend consisted of the Battle of Flags, celebrating the end of the harvest. My retinue were invited down to the mighty stronghold of Warwick to join in with the celebrations being held there. We met up with the Warwick Castle Garrison, the York Household consisting of the York City Levy and the Clarence

"Why did we ban flat shooting?"

Anon.

"Yes, I'm cleaning this helmet with olive oil"

Simon Lane telling fibs to the public, while hiding the 3in1 bottle behind his back

The troops on the outside of the castle demonstrate to the public the best way to cook marshmallows over an open fire, while the garrison has a tea break and a quick shave.

Later in the day, the ruse of splitting the second rank into two useable portions was foiled when the split personalities disagreed and one half defected to the local militia.

(PHOTOS: PUBLIC)

"Come here and I'll rip your face off!!"

Paul Hadfield asking local youths to leave the site

"Do you actually sleep in those tents? My God!"

Member of public



Tents wherein we sleep. (Mind you, occasionally we just pass out in them.)

(PHOTO: PUBLIC)

"Those feathers were given to me by a pleasant pheasant fuck*r"

Catherine Wetton explaining the manufacture of her hat to assembled (astonished and embarrassed) members of the public

**“A new command:
‘Form for Whores” -
i.e. no hose just
Braes esp. when hot,
and aren't all the
Buckingshams hot!
Rufff!”**

*Emailed comment from
Marcus Petz*

**“Who is your enemy?
Who will take you all
on?”**

Mark Vance to kids

“Me! Me! I will!”

*Psychotic kid aka future
member of Staffords*

“That's a big erection”

*Zoe A, referring to the large
conference tent being
erected by Warwick Castle
below the Peacock Garden*

**“Stop rubbing your
weapon up and down
girls”**

*Zoe again, referring to
Binky playfully hitting Tee
with his sword*

**“Its always a Party
with the Bucks”**

Louise (with the Woodvilles)

**“Rachel, how do you
cope with Darren
snoring?”**

**“I don't intend for
him to get much
sleep”**

Shall remain nameless

**“Look, my pussy's
smoking”**

Zoe, again again again...

Household, and the Lincoln Castle Garrison who combined with the Woodville's to form the fourth household.

There was a drill display in the morning of each day to demonstrate to the city of Warwick and other neighbouring communities the strength and skills of our combined forces and quell any unrest in the area.

The rest of the day consisted of games to celebrate the Festival of Bread. The various games over the three days included ones such as ‘wife-carrying’ in which all the young light females were hoisted onto the shoulders of the strong agile young, or not so young, men. I must admit that due to the sneakery of the Warwick Captain, we were robbed of our rightful first place in that competition. ‘Arse-kicking’ was also regularly played, with our Master Harley regularly competing in it and, for some reason, being ganged up on. ‘Hat-fencing’ and ‘Hood-man Blind’ were also played but no winner was announced as they were just for fun. ‘Toggle’ was also played, much to the delight of some of the men from both my retinue and the York City Levy. (‘Toggle’ is a cross between rugby, tag, lacrosse, and quoits, a vicious mixture but a very good game for training the men.) There was also a demonstration of people's skills with the bows in the evening, shooting such targets as pieces of string and Warwick Liveries, and “that kid on the battlements up there”.

One of my men tried to get a peacock onto the archery range but the peacock had other ideas and escaped.

The Battle of the Flags on the first day was valiantly won by my men, despite the York Household's obvious method of cheating by not bringing a standard to the field of play. However at the end of the this battle, two of the sides did not want to stop fighting, so a free-for-all occurred, which despite the Marshals' best attempts to stop, just involved them getting beaten up as well.

The second day saw the York Household winning and another scrap due to someone crying cheat. The third day was the disappointing one in that the Warwick Castle Garrison, otherwise known as the Gloucester Household, won. The women with the kitchen implements were forbidden to join in the free-for-all at the end, which was most disappointing, for them at any rate. I'm sure that my men were glad to avoid the dents in their helmets.

Small snippets of the nightlife have made it back to my ears. The local hostelry delighted in our custom by holding a lock-in on the Sunday eve. Much singing and dancing was believed to have taken place back at the camp-

fire, including some combat dancing in the form of the dance called ‘the nine pin’. The romantic situation of the castle was enjoyed by many young couples especially that pair who were not seen after leaving the local hostelry together.

And finally, it was good to hear that at least some of my retainers take personal hygiene so seriously that they went down to the River Avon for a wash.

Blore Heath 22nd - 23rd September

“Look! the rising sun”

I was immensely amused to hear reports of my retinue's exploits at Blore Heath in the month of September. Such is their thirst for glory and battle that instead of being several miles away with the King, as my grandfather was in 1459, they positioned themselves at the very centre of the Lancastrian lines.

By all accounts they flew the Ducal banner at parley (no doubt achieving this by hiding the banners of the luckless Audley and Dudley). This is a triumph that even I in all my dealings with King Dickon over his bratted nephews could not have achieved.



Paul Hadfield, obviously receiving urgent running repairs to his codpiece stitching. Unless anyone thinks they know better.

(PHOTO: TEE GILMORE)

Not only that, but I hear that the debauchery plumbed new depths in the aftermath of defeat on Saturday, with my informants whispering something about a ‘conga’ (how they came about this eel I do not know) and the stripping of a young lass as yet she danced.

I note with a certain satisfaction that the power of the contemporary Lancastrian army is so great that on the Sunday replay of the battle it had to be plundered for men to bolster the feeble Yorkist ranks. (This is obviously in no small part due to my retinue being a major component of it.) Since the modern Yorkist

Gowns for beginners

How to avoid the social *faux pas* of being naked in front of your friends

For re-enactment purposes gowns come in very useful. Not only do they provide another layer when we're blessed with typical English weather, but they can also boost the aesthetic social standing to that of middle class.

Depending on the design, they are fine to wear over a kirtle, be it the height of summer or the chill of spring and autumn. They can keep out the wind, keep off the sun, and at night be used as an extra blanket if necessary!

Article written by CATHERINE WETTON, seamstress to some of the best-dressed kit junkies in the Buckingham.

Swiss Tony's Guide to
Flags of the World
Number 1: England



A gown is an overdress, worn for warmth, fashion and 'Sunday best' depending on social standing, the job one is doing, and whether or not it was a holiday. To be clothed in just your shift and kirtle in upper circles was deemed to be as good as being naked so gowns were worn daily. In the working classes, kirtles would be worn to do manual labour and the gown when it wouldn't get dirty. The middle classes wore a more modest gown daily, with their 'posh frocks' kept for best.

Styles

There are a variety of styles. The main one for the latter half of the fifteenth century was belted under the bosom with full skirts, with a V-neck showing the kirtle at the front. Earlier pictorial evidence shows the neckline high and buttoned from below the breast to the neck, while later evidence shows the necks becoming wider, to almost off the shoulder and scooped as opposed to a V. This trend led on to the square-necked dress we are more familiar with as a Tudor style. Also as the fifteenth century passed, the belt-line dropped from the breast to the waist, the upper parts of the dress being close fitting, with very full skirts.

The under bust style gown does have a tendency to make even the slimmest girls look pregnant. Don't worry, this was extremely fashionable at the time. Sleeves were normally worn close fitting, the more expensive type having cuffs that went over the palm, indicating how little manual labour the wearer did. Having such a tight fit the sleeves were often buttoned or laced at the wrists. Having a gown with removable sleeves is fine, the sleeves could be alternated and were often different colours. These were sometimes even given as presents, as records show one pair were even given to Elizabeth I!

There are three main types of gown that we can wear. The styles of these can be interpreted to individual choice, but please make sure you have evidence to back up more unusual styles.

Tabard type

The first is the tabard type. Open at the sides and normally worn sleeveless, this style originated in Italy. Sam is often seen wearing hers over a contrasting kirtle, with matching partlett. This style can be laced at the side, or left open, as mine is. These can be made with a different colour lining, and therefore becoming more versatile as they could then be reversed for an optional look. If this style gown is

laced then the belt can be worn on the hips or waist, however if left open, must be belted under the bosom. This type is probably the easiest type to make, and can be worn for the more everyday tasks, depending on the fabric of course. Types of fabric used for this type are normally linen or fine wool (in their terms) lined with linen. A patterned linen lining or damask/ brocade outer can also be very becoming. (See Figure 1.)



Figure 1 The tabard type gown.

Overgown type

The second type is the more familiar over gown with voluptuous skirts, sleeves, and belted under the bosom (for later styles the waist line can be dropped, but for general wear I would advise the under-bust style). Made from wool or linen, and always lined, this style would not be worn for everyday tasks such as cleaning, and would possibly be kept for 'Sunday best' by the working classes.

Middle class women would generally wear these types daily with a small matching hood, which was most often worn in the home. The gowns would often be trimmed with a collar of fur or a contrasting coloured fabric, possibly the same as the lining. Typical examples of this type are the dark teal, fur-trimmed one that I often wear, the linen one that Emma wears, and the wool one Jane wears. (See Figure 2.)

Courtly type

The third type is the kind that would only be worn in courtly circles. Generally made from velvet, these are often worn with a false kirtle. These normally have extremely long skirts often ending in a



Figure 2 The overgown type.



Figure 3 The courtly gown.

train and were always lined with a sumptuous fabric that would be on show when the hem was tucked up into the belt. The pictorial evidence makes one believe they never walked far as the hemline seems to be at least twice as long as necessary! Sam's court dress, made from royal-blue velvet, is waisted on her natural waist, with a false kirtle underneath, whereas mine, made from apple green velvet,

is waisted under the bust. (See Figure 3.)

TO BE CONTINUED ...

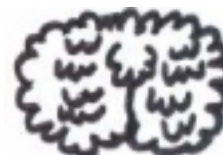
An article on how to make gowns will appear in a future issue of SwanSong.

Catherine Wetton is currently working on her Spring 2003 clothing collection.

**Swiss Tony's Guide to
Flags of the World
Number 2: Australia**



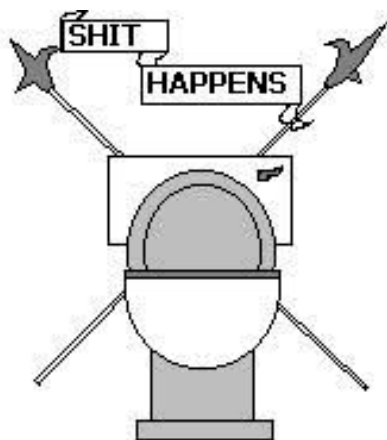
Number 3: Wales



Number 4: Japan



Advertising Feature



Society for Health In Toilets

MANIFESTO

1. This organisation will fight for the right to relieve oneself in clean, comfortable, and hygienic surroundings, until such time as the Government introduces a formal regulatory body (**OFLOO**).
2. We maintain that all portaloos at re-enactment events should be:
 - i) cleaned at least once per day
 - ii) within running distance of all camps
 - iii) supplied with sweet-

- iv) scented disinfectant products, Toilet Duck, and quilted toilet paper
- iv) constructed with extra-thick walls to prevent noxious sounds/smells disturbing other re-enactors
- v) supplied with convenient holders for purses/daggers/bills
3. We maintain that all portaloos at re-enactment events should NOT be:
 - i) brimming with excrement or urine
 - ii) accessible to the public
 - iii) positioned on a steep slope

- iv) cleaned while someone is in occupation
4. SHIT will hold the event provider (eg English Heritage, National Trust, Madame Tussauds) responsible for any loose movements, constipation, or other difficulties of a digestive nature.
5. Cookery of re-enactment groups will NOT be held responsible for any loose movements, constipation or other difficulties of a digestive nature.
6. Offending event providers

7. Offending event providers (as defined above) will be punished by the most senior on-site representative being locked in the offending portaloos, which shall then be either rolled into the nearest river, for the purpose of an impromptu Bismarck re-enactment, OR used as a battering ram.

SHIT can be contacted on the porcelain telephone on 0800-BARF.

Group news & views

Pye Bridge militia in local security role?

From our Local Loony

In light of the recent events in New York and Afghanistan an emergency meeting of the parish council last week met representatives of the Somercotes and Pye Bridge militia regarding local security. They proposed that emergency measures be executed as soon as possible, or at least before the start of National Lottery Live, Saturday night. Measures proposed included:

1. The local black and reds (militia) should increase surveillance to include air space over the area.
2. That bloke with the microlite to cease all air activity for at least two months.
3. East Midlands Airport to close all flight paths over Somercotes, Pye Bridge, Jubilee Hill, the Dog and Doublet, and the Devonshire Arms. All air traffic to be re-

routed over Ironville.

4. Extra patrols should be mounted around prominent key buildings likely to be targeted by international terrorists, such as the Co-op and Pizza Pan.
5. The Co-op and Nottingham Road chip shop to remain open on a 24hr basis to cater for the expected extra demand for chips and fags during the crisis.
6. The Somercotes and Pye Bridge local militia demand that the Taliban immediately and unconditionally extradite Usama Bin Laden into our custody where he will be subjected to a swift but fair trial on Sunday morning in Chris's field, as long as it's not raining.

(Duke Harry notes that the words 'swift' and 'fair' are used in a re-enactment context and should not be interpreted literally.)

What they said about issue 6

"Wow, wow, wow. Thank you, you've brightened my day"
"That was ace"
"wow"

Rachel Reeves

Christmas feast entertainment

Reuters

You should all by now have received details about the feast at Treowen on 18th-20th January and know that Catherine Wetton and Dave Hemsley are organising the entertainment. Well, coordinating, anyway; the rest is up to you!

1. Friday night will be 'Wang Fashion Parade' night. If you have the 'gift of the gab' and delusions of being a presenter please tell them. You won't have a choice about taking part though; they'll be taking volunteers, willing or no...!
2. If you can play the piano and would like to showcase your talents during the weekend or fancy playing for a 'sing song' they would like to hear from you.
3. Let them know if you have **any** ideas for entertainment during the feast. As usual, there will be minor entertainment between the courses, with major pieces at the end.
4. If you can't think of anything to do but would like to make yourself available to be used and abused by others let them know as well. Budding singers, actors, and musicians are particularly welcome.

And be warned: don't think you will get out of doing anything if you don't get in touch with anyone. This is an audience participation feast, and everyone will be doing something, either preparation, cooking, serving, cleaning, or performing, sometimes all at once!!

Remember, a boldly good jolly time is guaranteed for all (even the vegetarians among us).



Gratuitous tank moment

Let's have another look at that Tiger in our rank.

Mmmmmmmmm ...

Feels good, doesn't it?

(PHOTO: TONY ROE)



In response to continual complaints that there were not enough pictures of Master Harley in issue 6, SwanSong is pleased to publish a recent picture of this well-loved member of the Arresting Crew, pictured here leading a raid to detain members of the Ring Fellowship thought to be harbouring stolen jewellery about their persons.

That's all for issue 7 (and you never thought I could get one out so quickly!) I hope you enjoyed it. Send contributions, complaints, bribes of money, offers of sex, to Dave Hemsley:

e-mail:
david@purpleardvark.freeserve.co.uk

or by surface mail:

25 Sandringham Road, Nottingham NG2 4HH). Tel: 0115 950 5560.

Computer files as Word 6/97 or .txt/.rtf, picture files as jpeg (less than 200 KB please, size no more than about 800x600).

Next issue December.

Deadline for material:
30th November.