

# The Swan Song

THE STAFFORD NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 14, MAY 2002

## 'WEEKEND WARRIORS!'



### Recreating the past ...

A GROUP of Alfreton locals are preparing for war this summer – when they re-enact a series of historical battles and events. For Buckingham's Retinue – an Alfreton-based 15th Century re-enactment group – will be wielding their weapons at a training session this weekend at Lincoln Castle, as they gear up for a season of historical re-enactments including the famous Battle of Bosworth. And this week Somercotes' David Hemsley (32), the editor of the group's newsletter, took time out from the sweat and toil of the battlefield to tell Chad how the group brings history to life.

● For the full story and more pictures, turn to page 9.

### By our Local correspondent

If it's in *Chad*, it must mean that we are important ... surely?

The clipping above was taken from the local Alfreton free paper, *Chad*, dated 11 April. The week before, they had run a story (about the size of the article above) on a 17th century event at Bolsover Castle.

I immediately wrote to the editor of the newspaper, pointing out that we were locally based, and was he interested in running a story on us. Well, the response was far faster than I had expected – I was contacted by a reporter on Tuesday, did a phone interview on Wednesday morning, sent some images by e-mail on the afternoon, and saw us in the paper on Thursday!

However, unlike the Bolsover event, we made the inside of the paper as well – the rest of the article is reproduced on page 4. Okay, some of the quotes are not quite as I said them, and some are faintly embarrassing, but it is quite impressive, nonetheless.

Write to the editor of your local paper, say what we do, suggest some local angle (after all, Buckingham had estates in many part of the country, not just the midlands) and say you can provide images. Write to the regional papers, local TV, listings magazines, national press – anything that can get us noticed – you never know, you could be the next 'Weekend Warrior'.

And if you DO get in the paper, send the clipping to *SwanSong*!

## WHAT'S IN THIS ISSUE?

A mixed portable recepticle of items for you this time.

On page 2, Duke Harry brings you pictures of the event at Lincoln Castle.

The archives pop up again on page 5 with more embarrassing photos of past Stafford Household events.

Chris presents a couple of 15th century poems on page 6.

Fyndyngs and Dyscoverys on pages 7 and 8 has advice on how to behave abroad, a complimentary letter about Buckingham from Richard III, and a review of *Pleasures and Pastimes in Medieval England*.

Finally, news takes up the last two pages, including latest information on this year's events and a report on the group's finances.

Thanks to all who contributed this month, including Allan, Andy, Chris, Darren, Ghost, Kate, Marcus and Phil.

Dave Unsworth sent me the following. I thought you might be interested:

'DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM (IRE) 7-y-o (12 Jun 1996) b g Current Owner: C W Booth Phardante (FR) – Deselby's Choice (Crash Course) Current Trainer: P R Webber

It is a novice chaser. I have seen it run a couple of times over the winter on TV. It is a horse that shows a lot of promise but I've not seen it win yet. One of the interesting things about this is that the colours of the owner C W Booth are our livery of Red and Black halves.'

# DUKE HARRY'S DIARY

*Who have we been beating up so far this season?*



The Wrecking Crew At Large

Winter Training

Lincoln Castle  
12–13 April

I extend cordial St George's day greetings to my retinue this fine day. Already the season of mayhem is upon us, coming upon us with but little warning, and I find that several of my men have been honing their already razor-sharp skills to a deadly edge at the Derbyshire estate of young Master Lane.

Good luck to them in the coming year, and my sympathies to those opponents that choose their end of the line!

## LINCOLN CASTLE 12–13 APRIL

And so to the first event of the year: Lincoln Castle. In the midst of some weather the like of which I have never seen before, the groups of Livery and Maintenance gathered for a couple of days of good-natured fighting and drinking in the environs of this fine fortress.

I was unable to attend this event, as I was unavoidably detained in Brecon by domestic matters, however, I am reliably informed that my retinue, despite being few in number, managed to forcibly imprint themselves on their opponents in battle (unfortunately for my editor, this was young Master Phil imprinting his billpoint upon the aforesaid editor's upper arm).

It wasn't all weapons and posturing, though, as a new camp layout was tried out (more about this elsewhere, my editor tells me), crafts were crafted, poles were oiled and ice-creams consumed. I am informed by



(Above) Who's that peeking through the windows ...?

(Below) Chris models this season's essential haircut and footwear.

my agents that my Captain has become a three-flake man, although I am unsure what 'flakes' are. I assume that they are a kind of fish only found around this part of the country.

Breakfast time with Marcus: chilled coffee in a bowl with Golden Graham floaters. mmmmmmm



**'ARE THOSE REAL MEN IN ARMOUR?'**

Small boy in crowd at Lincoln

# Duke Harry's Diary

## LINCOLN CASTLE 12-13 APRIL



(Above) The lads demonstrate the correct pole oiling technique. Plenty of rags on standby in case it gets messy.

(Below) Go on, admit it, you've watched *The Fellowship of the Ring* too many times, haven't you? Master Hemsley shows arrow use, Legolas-style.



Not only famous for its cathedral and castle, Lincoln also has a stormingly good ice cream shop. A group pilgrimage was made on Saturday, where Captain Howell wowed us all with his ability to control three flakes at once.



Forget flakes ...



# Duke Harry's Diary

## PETZ CORNER



There is no stopping the man! Following up on reports in SwanSong 9 and 12, my intrepid Petz insider has sent me proof of yet another business venture by the retinue's very own Green conscience.



Meanwhile, in deepest Stone, Mistress Kate has been secretly assembling a horse from raw eggs and used vacuum cleaner bags that she hopes to bring along to at least one event this year.

Everyone: say hello to 'Tess'. (That's Kate on top, in case you didn't recognise her out of 15th century kit.)



I cannot finish this month's diary without mentioning Emma and Steve, who, as you probably all know by now, are now proud parents to young Bethany. I extend my warmest greetings to them, and wish all three the very best of health and happiness.

Finally, did you hear the joke about the retinue, the duck and the leaky water tap? ... at Lincoln Castle again.

Harre Bockingham



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More local news for Alfreton, Pinxton, Selston, Somercotes, South Normanton, Swanwick, Tibshelf

11th April 2003 Alfreton Chad 9

# Weekend warriors!



### Report by Richard Hooton

A GROUP of Alfreton locals are preparing for war this summer – when they re-enact a series of historical battles and events.

For Buckingham's Retinue – an Alfreton-based 15th Century re-enactment group – will be wielding their weapons at a training session this weekend at Lincoln Castle, as they gear up for a season of historical re-enactments including the famous Battle of Bosworth.

And this week Somercotes' David Hemsley (32), the editor of the group's newsletter, took time out from the sweat and toil of the battlefield to tell Chad how the group brings history to life.

"We try to cover as accurately as possible the period around the 1450s to the 1490s," he told Chad. "It's about having fun and putting on a good display for the public." The group formed in the mid-1990s and boasts around 60 paid-up members who travel from across the country, though the majority of the committee are local with around 15 members from the



Alfreton area.

Dressed in period costume they re-enact events from the Wars of the Roses, styling themselves on the Duke of Buckingham – an English noble best known for his rebellion during the reign of King Richard III – and visit up to 12 sites each year.

As well as recreating the past, the weekend warriors give demonstrations and public talks and research history to make events as

accurate as possible.

And they also hold 'whodunnit' murder mystery events based on actual historical feuds.

David, who was introduced to the group by a friend, said: "I love it. It does tend to grip you and becomes a big part of your life."

"I have known the people in the group for a long time so it's a very social thing. You are outside all weekend and get to camp in historical places. If you have an

interest in history then it's a chance to flesh it out. I'm into the history, camping and I'm quite fond of the fighting actually."

Members stage skirmishes clad in armour plating, and David said there are basic rules to keeping battles safe.

"You can't go into battle if you are not wearing equipment such as gloves and helmet. The weapons are real weapons but blunted and points are ground down and it's no more dangerous than a game of rugby," he added.

"Everyone knows what they are doing and you don't hit someone – people wear padding but you pull your blow. We're not a theatrical group and everything happens in the raw. The fights aren't pre-determined and if someone appears to have hit you hard enough to chop your arm off you acknowledge that and go down."

Upcoming events include the garrisoning of Tutbury Castle in June, a re-enactment at Tewkesbury in July and the Battle of Bosworth on 16th and 17th August.

The group always welcome new members and locals can get more information by logging onto the website [www.bucks-retinue.org.uk](http://www.bucks-retinue.org.uk) or contact David on 01773 528801.

# Once Upon A Time In The Staffords



This month in the archive hour, we have photos taken at, in clockwise order, Kenilworth (1995), ?unknown? (early 90s), Porchester (1996), St Albans (1994), and Tatton Old Hall (1992/3?).

Thanks to all who sent in photos – keep them coming!

I have a small correction to make regarding last issue's newspaper article about Ashby-de-la-Zouch. Although it was an event largely run by the Stafford Household under the Livery & Maintenance banner, the York City Levy were heavily involved, as happened at many events during that period.



And with the news that we will be welcoming Rhian back into the red and black, here is a photograph taken at a past feast, to remind her just how much she misses us all ...

Look, there was a silly hat competition, OKAY?



# FOR SUM BE LEWED

## *Lyric and verse in 15th century England*

**By Chris Howell**

I think an appropriate subtitle at this stage may well be 'welcome to the black hole' as the level of knowledge on the above subject is pretty much zero within re-enactment. I intend to remedy this situation with a couple of examples and hopefully spark a little interest followed by some suggestions of further reading for those interested in digging a bit deeper.

Whenever anyone thinks of medieval poems or songs the two which invariable spring to mind are 'the Cutty Wren', popularised as 'John the Red Nose', and 'Sumer is icumen in'. Whilst there is nothing wrong with these two they date from the 13th and not the 15th century, and whilst they were probably still popular or at least known they do not encapsulate the spirit of England in the 15th century in the same way that Victorian poetry does not reflect the moods and needs of modern society or current culture.

When reading about 15th century poetry it is important to apply the usual academic guff filter that you would use when reading any commentary, as the rubbish written is sometimes unbelievable. Apparently, poems and songs were never written for their own sake in mediaeval times?! Furthermore they were exclusively performed by travelling minstrels and noone else?!

It is clear from surviving verse that much of it was not crafted by professional performers and was certainly written for the amusement of the author and his/her friends. The proportion of poems written by women from a female perspective is small, but considering the chauvinism of the time it is surprising that there are any at all.

I have selected two poems as appetisers and I think it would be safe to say they are both written in the low style. Neither have a known author or title and this is common for medieval verse of any date. The first poem is easily understood and needs relatively little interpretation. I have suggested the meaning for some words in the margin but you are free to make your own interpretation. The second poem is more difficult to understand and some lines have required translation. However I strongly recommend perseverance as it is like no other medieval work you have ever read!

It is perhaps fair to say that life in the late 15th century was as much rife with filth and muckment as it is today; this can only be a

*Continued on next page*

Women, women, love of women  
Maketh bare purses of sum men.

*repeat after each stanza*

Sum be mery, and sum be sad,  
And sum be besy, and sum be bad;  
Sum be wilde, by Seint Chad;  
Yet all be not so,  
For sum be lewed,  
And sum be shrewed;  
Go, shrew, wheresoever ye go.

*like a shrew*

*last three lines repeated in each stanza*

Sum be wise and sum be fonde;  
Sum be tame, I understand;  
Sum take bred at a mannes hond;  
Yet all be not so.

*foolish*

Sum be wroth and cannot tell wherfore;  
Sum be skorning evermore,  
And sum be tusked like a bore;  
Yet all be not so.

Sum will be dronken as a mouse;  
Sum will be crooked and will hurte a louse;  
Sum be faire and good in a house;  
Yet all be not so.

Sum be snouted like an ape;  
Sum can nother play ne jape;  
Sum of them be well shape;  
Yet all be not so.

*neither play nor jape*

Sum can prate without hire;  
Sum make bate in every shire;  
Sum can play chekmate with our sire;  
Yet all they do not so.

*chatter*

*cause trouble in every shire  
be a match for our sire*

The second poem is in three verses and I have added more commentary.

May no man slepe in youre halle,  
For dogges, madame – for dogges, madame –  
But if he have a tent of XV inche  
With twey clogges,  
To drive away the dogges, madame.  
Iblessed be such clogges,  
That giveth such bogges,  
Bitwene my lady legges,  
To drive away the dogges, madame.

*unless he has an instrument of 15 inches  
with two wooden balls*

*movements*

May no man slepe in youre halle,  
For rattes, madame – for rattes, madame –  
But if he have a tent of XV inche  
With letheren knappes,  
To drive away the rattes, madame.  
Iblessed be such knappes,  
That giveth such swappes,  
Under my lady lappes,  
To drive away the rattes, madame.

*with leather knobs*

*strokes*

May no man slepe in youre halle,  
For flies, madame – for flies, madame –  
But if he have a tent of XV inche  
With ... byes,  
To drive away the flies, madame.  
Iblessed be such byes,  
That giveth such swyes,  
Bitwene my lady thyes,  
To drive away the flies, madame.

*line is obscure*

*movements*

## HOW TO ACT LIKE AN ENGLISHMAN ABROAD

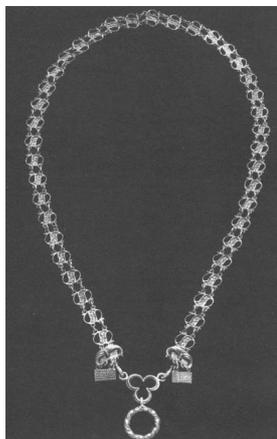
A Spaniard wrote one of the best accounts of English Troops in action at the latter end of the 15th century. It illustrates the attitude of the soldiers, their behaviour in battle and a different way of fighting to what is recognised as the norm. In 1486 Sir Edward Woodville took a retinue of 200 men-at-arms and 100 archers to Spain to help in the conquest of Granada, (this qualified as a Crusade in the 15th century). Friar Antonio Agrapida when writing his *Chronicle of the Conquest of Granada* described the English like this:

This cavalier was from England and brought with him a train of his vassals, men who had been hardened in certain civil wars which had raged in their country. They were huge feeders and deep carousers and could not accommodate themselves to the sober diet of our troops, but fain eat and drink after the manner of their own country. They were often noisy and unruly also, in their was-sail, and their quarter of the camp was prone to be a scene of loud revel and sudden brawl. They were withal of great pride and believed themselves the most perfect men on earth. With all this, it must be said of them that they were marvellous good men in the field, dexterous archers and powerful with their battle-axe. In the great pride and self-will, they always sought to press their advantage and take the post of danger ... They did not rush forward fiercely, or make a brilliant onset, like the Moorish or Spanish troops but went into the fight deliberately, and persisted obstinately and were slow to find out when they were beaten!

Nice; now you have an account of how to act on camp and the field. Here is another extract of Woodville and his troops in action during the siege of Loja:

He (Woodville) was followed by a body of his yeomen armed in a like manner (wearing plate?), and by a band of archers. The earl turned to his troops and addressed them bluntly according to the manner of the country. '*Remember my merry men all the eyes of strangers are upon you. You are in a foreign land, fighting for the Glory of God and the honour of England!*' A loud shout was the reply. The earl waved his battle-axe over his head, '*St George for England!*' He cried. They soon made their way into the midst of the enemy but when engaged in the hottest of the fight they made no shouts or outcries. They pressed steadily forward dealing blows right and left, hewing down Moors while the archers pressing into the opening they made, plied their bows vigorously and spread death on every side.

Now, we can do that can't we?

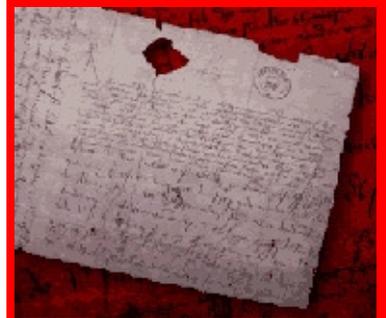


Silver collar of SS consisting of 41 letters S meeting in an ornamental arrangement of buckles and links ending in a fluted ring, c. 1440. (In the collection of the Museum of London.)

See *SwanSong* 9 for a discussion of the significance of the letters.

## A LETTER FROM RICHARD III

The photograph is of a letter from Richard III to the Lord Chancellor, the Bishop of Lincoln, ordering him to send the Great Seal and some of the officers of the Chancery, since he could not come in person by reason of his 'infirmities and diseases'. It is dated 12 October 1483 and an extract reads:



We wolde most gladly ye came yourself yf that ye may ... Here, loved be God, ys all well and trewly determyned, and for to resyste the malysse of hym that hadde best cawse to be trewe, and the duc of Bokyngam, the most untrew creature lvyng, whom with Godes grace we shall not be long tyls that we wyll be in that partyes and subdewe hys malys. We assure you that was never falss trayt[or] better purvayde for, as this berrerr, Gloucestre shall shew y(ou).

The Duke of Buckingham rebelled against the King on 18 October 1483. He was defeated and beheaded on 2 November 1483.

*Continued from page 6*

good thing. Fundamentally, it shows that despite any amount of scholastic drivel to the contrary, nothing really changes from one century to the next.

For further reading I suggest the following:

Luria and Hoffmann, *Middle English Lyrics*.

Robbins, R.H. *Secular lyrics of the four-*

*teenth and fifteenth centuries.*

Brown and Carleton, *Religious lyrics of the fifteenth century.*

# Fyndngs & Dyscoveries

## BOOK REVIEW

### Pleasures & Pastimes in Medieval England

Compton Reeves (1995), Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd, ISBN 0-7509-0089-X

This book comes from the same stable that gave us *Daily Life in the Late Middle Ages*, *The Military Campaigns of the Wars of the Roses*, *Richard III and Buckingham's Rebellion*, and a cabal of other fine volumes.

*Pleasures & pastimes* is well endowed with photographs and includes 11 color plates. Providing a backdrop to the military life of the time it is somewhat artificially divided into the following 10 chapters:

#### 1. Literature

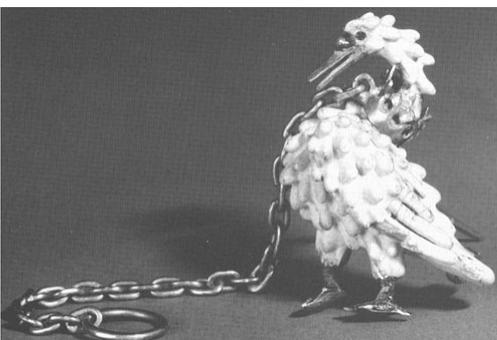
This chapter covers; Romance, from the phrase 'mettez en romanz' – meaning to put in Romance the language we now call Old French; Poetry; Prose; 'Informative Literature' and legal treatises are summarily dealt with. The abstract is avoided by exemplifying from the authors, Chaucer, Trevisa, Lydgate and Gower. For example 'John Gower is a reminder that the literary world of late medieval England was trilingual. His three major works are "Mirour de l'omme" in French, "Vox Clamantis" in Latin and "Confessio Amantis" in English.'

#### 2. Art, architecture, music and dancing

Art was for dei Gloria rather than personal fame and so we don't know by name who made much of the surviving art. The architecture written about is mostly the religious stuff. Some reference is made to murals, but as the best examples are in Italia only those in Longthorpe Tower in Northants. are shown. Music covers Plainchant, Polyphony, Instruments and Musicians. Some mention is made of secular music and dancing though details of songs and steps are absent.

#### 3. Fashion, ornament and craftsmanship

With such a broad period the book is necessarily brief, however it gives a fair treatment of 15th century fashion. There are some particularly good pictures: p.54, an English manuscript, c.1450, showing a knight being



armed for combat; p.63, The Dunstable fettered swan jewel; and the Winewharf Lancastrian SS collar on p.65 (see photos).

#### 4. Games, drama and heraldry

Children's games, dicing, board games, chess and cards are mentioned. The first reference to playing cards being Margery Pas-



ton's of 1461. And it is claimed 'the queen of all standard English suits today is a stylized representation of a contemporary portrait of Elizabeth of York, wife of Henry VII, who holds in her hand the white rose of York'. The drama section is good, covering Mumming, Morality/Miracle Plays, touching on the role of devotional societies, guilds and Commemorative Anniversary Services held for deceased great nobility.

#### 5. Sport, hunting and tournaments

Good detail is given of the Bastard of Burgundy's legendary fight in England. This fight personified the highest aims of chivalry and the origins of such events is covered. For who won and what happened you'll have to read the book.

#### 6. Nature, pets and gardening

Cats, dogs, monkeys, squirrels and pigs are all mentioned. Types of garden are dug over in great detail; hortus – any garden, gardinum – kitchen garden, any specialist garden for example rose garden or medicinal herb garden – herbarium and a pleasure ground – viridarium.



#### 7. Diet, the tavern and codes of behaviour

Though sketchy on diet the most telling quotes are 'Cookery books surviving from the Middle Ages are unfortunately useless as a guide to what people generally ate, because

they discuss the sophisticated dishes prepared for the tables of the moneyed.' And 'The consumption of meat increased in the 14th and 15th centuries, which made for an improvement in the diet.' Codes of behaviour goes into table etiquette, chivalry, the yeoman gentry honor system a la Paston and also flatling and how to deal with personal insults.

#### 8. Religion

Guilds, feast days, pilgrimage are mentioned. Astrology is covered, a science which Richard II was interested in. Astrology was for the higher strata of society both a courtly and an ecumenical matter.

#### 9. Mysticism and personal devotion

Covers various mystics, the rosary, books of hours and the poem Piers Plowman.

#### 10. Poaching, sorcery and prostitution

Something about the Duchess of Gloucester's connection with necromancy, image-magic, green magic and candle magic is mentioned, although details are vague. Prostitution is covered in more depth. Finally, the chapter racks up some information on the sadistic entertainment of criminal punishments.

There is an index, list of sources – broken up by chapter as well as a Bibliography for further reading. Though how useful it is is debatable especially considering the volume of material being published now a days. A good aspect of the book is that source details are clearly given in the text, for example 'many parish churches were also built in perpendicular style ... examples ... still to be seen would be Long Melford, Lavenham, and Southwold, all in Suffolk'.

All in all a wide ranging book which is accessible and a brilliant source from which to begin more in depth research on aspects of late mediaeval life.

Marcus Petz

## CAMP AND EVENT CHANGES: 'ARMING FOR WARRE'

By Andy Howes

As discussed at the last AGM we tried the new camp layout at Lincoln and it was a great success. There are a few tweaks left to do and there is still some more additions to be made to the camp but overall it's getting there. We still have to be more mindful of our overall camp tidiness (fag butts, weapons left lying about, general untidiness and so on but we are getting better). We have to keep reminding ourselves what the camp looks like to outsiders and not necessarily rely on being told to keep it clean.

We have decided to call the time we spend as an authentic camp 'Arming for Warre'. We shall be endeavouring to do this at every event we attend, although obviously at our own events we shall in effect be doing this all day.

Obviously 'Arming for Warre' isn't just arming for warre! but we needed a name for it and 'the living history hour' just didn't cut it. I know we have discussed the things before that we are hoping to do here but we still need folks to come forward and actually put on displays/talks. We shall be doing the obvious ones like the arms and armour, archery and the kiddies stuff but we need more subjects that involve the less militaristic (but still part of a military camp). Again I know people have discussed things like carpentry, painting, candle making, washing, material dyeing, writing, and so on but we do need these displays up and running. We shall be running clothing talks and so on too and anyone not specifically involved in a particular subject will be encouraged to take part and learn the ropes so to speak.

Also during this period we shall be running the camp as authentic as possible so it is necessary to have some idea on what your background and relationship to the other members of the group is. For example it wouldn't be appropriate to walk up to the

captain, slap him on the back and say 'Alright Chris matey!' A number of the group are playing middle class roles, as well as possibly clergy and so on, so its important that this is reflected somewhat. One thing to bear in mind here though is that for the most part we are a retinue of the Duke of Buckingham and not part of the peasantry or other land classes. Neither are we a levy or other such force called up by a commissions of array so most of us would be a permanent part of the household of the Duke or one of his retainers. This means that when not fighting or supporting the fighting unit we would have jobs within such a household or running the estate. If anyone needs any guidance on this area of our camp structure please have a chat with me.

In addition to the arming for warre we have decided that to start the day properly we shall bring back drill practise at 9.00am (groan). This is to get every ready for the days events and will be followed by breakfast then at 10.00am by a briefing so we all know what is going to happen during the day.

During this briefing we feel it is also the time to garner our 'volunteers' for the various camp duty tasks that need performing. This includes things like wood/water, cooking, washing up and other duties that may be required.

Finally, this whole idea is still in development somewhat and so may change as the season progresses. Any ideas that people have will be most gratefully received and please let us know if there are any aspects of this which can be improved upon. The intention of this is twofold, to improve the camp generally for the public viewing/enjoyment and to improve it for our own enjoyment, so we need to know if this is working/not working as the case may be.

## EVENT NEWS

### Dartmouth Castle

Allan has written the script for this event, and needs to know who will be attending so he can divvy out roles. **IMPORTANT:** if you wish to be included in the plot, please let Allan know by Kenilworth.

Note that this does not prevent anyone from attending – this is just for the purpose of being included in the plot.

### St.Aubin

Phil has finally spoken to Liz Rocher, our agent in France. It turns out that the event will not go ahead this year due to political and beaurocratic wrangling in St.Aubin. However, it is likely the event will become a regular thing in future years with large amounts of regional and European funding. This is good for us and means that in future years the event should take place. We will endeavour to scout out the site later this year.

### Tutbury

Phil met the 'owner', Lesley, on the 26th April (she's the lady who plays Mary, Queen of Scots) and the event is 100% confirmed. She would be delighted to have a horse there and wants to take photos for a brochure on the castle. The horse can go into the inner bailey but would probably be better to joust in the outer area somewhere. It would be really nice if we could picket the horse in part of the camp somehow (to add to our 'arming for warre'!).

### Kenilworth

The event is a Fauconbergs event, with invite to almost all the Fed except a handful of groups. Although English Heritage have advertised it as Fed, they are wrong. No doubt we will receive more details on this at Holdenby.

### Other Fed

The only two official Fed events this year are Bosworth and Blore Heath.

## MORTIMER'S CROSS 2003

We have received notification of a re-enactment of the Battle of Mortimers Cross on 7th–8th June, at Leominster Medieval Fair.

We do not intend making this a group event, but instead will run it as we did Pilleth – attendance is on an individual basis, and the group will not be taking a van.

It is to take place at Broadward Hall, near Leominster. Other details could not be found as we went to press, but Leominster is not too far from the Midlands, being close to Hereford on the A49, and an hour's drive or so from Birmingham. If interested contact a committee member and we will send out more when we have it.

# Group News & Views

## GROUP FINANCES

By Darren Brown

This year, unfortunately, is not going to be a good one for the finances. We started the year with a good amount of money (about £4500 before L&M money). After purchasing some nice new equipment (see previous *SwanSongs* and the *Bulletin* – ed.) this will come down to about £3000. I have estimated that costs of getting equipment to events will be about £1400, which is about the same as last year.

### 2003 estimated income

Income, however, will be down on previous years. We are getting £800 for Dartmouth and 30% of gate (about £1 a person, we got £180 last time) for Tutbury. We also might get some from L&M and the Fed, depending on attendance. Membership should bring in about £800. As you can see this is about even, which means we won't be any better off come the end of the season.

### 2002 income

We earned £2400 from four EH events (Mulchelney £700, Lincoln £600, and Old Sarum & Middleham £550). We got £750 from Tamworth, £972 from L&M and a missing cheque for £200 from Fed. Membership money raised £630 from 43 members.

### Previous years' income

The year before (2001) we had 49 members (£735). We made £1880 from events and £2445 from L&M. Finally, for 2000, 36 members (£540), events of £3200 and L&M of £1300.

Income is summarised in Table 1. This shows that this year we could potentially see a 50% drop on each of the previous three. This shows the importance of making sure Tutbury is well-publicised, in order to maximise our earnings there.

### Food

Food always costs more than the charge on the day. This will remain at £2.50 a day (regardless of the amount you eat), though may rise if required. Please make sure you pay this.

Table 1: Group earnings 2000–2003.

	Membership	Events	L&M/Fed	Total
Forecast 2003	£800	£1580	£400	£2780
2002	£630	£3150	£1172	£4952
2001	£735	£1880	£2445	£5060
2000	£540	£3200	£1300	£5040

## NEED NEW KIT?

As most of you may be aware, we have a problem with anyone getting gear made up from within the group. We are intending to produce a booklet which should detail some costume tips and patterns but this won't be available till later in the year. In the meantime for those urgent requirements, such as basics, Andy Howes' mother has stepped in to produce some reasonable gear at very reasonable prices (see Table 2).

First some caveats. The gear that is produced is basic, so don't expect any frills, fancy edging, pleats or anything like that. The stuff that is being made is to cover those basics that everyone needs but that some folks can't get made without paying lots of money. They will come with point holes specified by yourself but buttons will not be sewn on nor will actual points be provided.

Secondly, do not order large quantities of gear as this will be refused. The idea behind this at the moment is to get everyone to a reasonable standard, not increase existing wardrobes.

Thirdly, payment must be made in cash as no credit will be given; this is non negotiable.

Finally, you must provide the material to make the gear and a guide is included to what you may need. This generally leads to spare material (which is given back) after the garments(s) are made but you are better having too much than too little. The amount of material is for the average size person. You'll notice it is mostly male kit but we hope to be doing kirtles and stuff soon.

If interested, contact Andy Howes (details opposite).

### Forum address

Don't forget the Bucks' Web Forum; everyone is welcome to join in:

<http://www.1485.org/bucksboard.html>

## NEWS UPDATES

1. The new bills and bill rack, reported in the *Bulletin*, will have their first outing at Holdenby.

2. The new storage shed has been built and has been in use post Lincoln. Thanks to Andy Howes, Dave Hemsley, Simon Lane, Richard Hunt and Chris Howell for giving time on the only rainy day in about four weeks. So far, it has stayed up ...!

Table 2: Fabric quantities and prices for basic kit.

Garment	Material needed	Price
Shirt	2 yards	£12
Shift	3–4 yards	£12
Braies	1 yard	£7
Coifs	0.5 yards	£5
Arming cap	0.5 yards	£10
Hose	3 yards	£25
Poirepoint	1yd + 1yd lining	£15
Doublet	2yds + 2yds lining	£25
Livery coat	3yds* + 3 yds lining	£30
Hats	0.5 yard	£10

\* Made up of 1.5 yards red/1.5 yards black

### THE COMMITTEE

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That's it for another month! Event reports, photos, stories, research, findings, jokes, etc, always needed. Send them to Dave Hemsley: 473 Lower Somercotes Somercotes Alfreton Derbyshire DE55 4NS Next issue, June(-ish).