

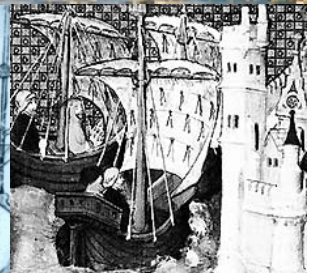
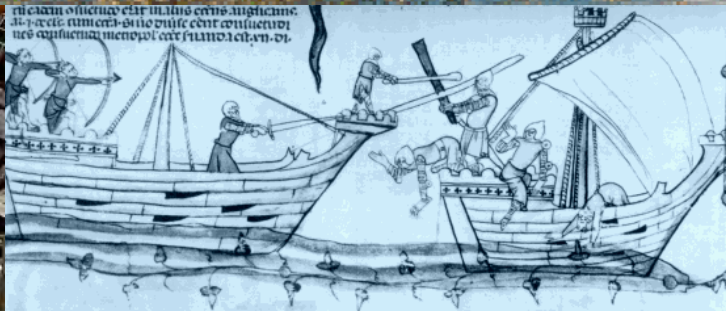
Der Schwan Gesang



DIE STAFFORD ZEITUNG

KIEL AUSGABE, OKTOBER 2003,

Das Boot



Conwy Castle 15th century
(British Library, Harley ms 1319, f14v.)

27TH SEPTEMBER 2003



The gallant crew of the *Black Swan* gathered at Manchester airport for the flight to Germany, where they would take passage on a



ship bound for the Baltic. But first, Andy needed a cigarette. Considerately, the airline called us through by name, to make sure we knew where we were going.

Once in Germany we got lost, despite the GPS in the hire car (in German, so next to useless). We eventually found our way to the



Autobahn by the Dirk Gently method of following another car; it worked.

waitress, and Andy revealed a staggering talent for speaking English to the Germans.

(Above) Conveniently, Kiel's soho was our side of the city centre. This is a poster showing the "delights" on offer inside. Note the tissues.

Once in Kiel, our thoughts turned to food. We found somewhere to eat, Marcus chatted up the



(Left) Mark solved our luggage space problem in a local camping shop.



(Above) CAKES!!! On the BBC!



First task was to get the ship looking like Buckingham's Retinue were there. This involved leaving as much clutter lying around



as possible, and putting the group banners on as many ropes as possible. We also changed their German flag for our English



one (which may explain why we were repeatedly circled by a German navy frigate – we were also told that we were sailing in 'forbidden water' ...).



Marcus passed on his sword and dagger fighting expertise, as taught to Master Harley, to the younger crewmembers.



We also kitted out the crew. The problem here was that we only really had the group kit, which as everyone in the group knows, is quite old, and fits only 16-



stone, 7-foot tall men. It was lucky we had stuff be-



longing to Darren and Paul Bravey, although Uwe looking like Darren in his livery



jacket caused us more than a couple of double-takes, and Martina wear-

ing my over-doublet means that I may never wash it again.

We also had to keep reminding the captain about a minor medieval clothing point, exemplified in the phrase "Pockets! Captain!", repeated at intervals ...





Just pretend that the small inflatable dinghy with the producer on is a pirate ship, OKAY!

Then we armed up for the cameras, did a couple of poses, and got told to take it all off again in case one of us fell overboard. As if that could happen!

Filming the military side consisted of armour-cleaning, bow-stringing, and about 100 takes filmed from a dinghy of us shouting at non-



You know what would happen if you loosed one of Darren's sharps at that dinghy?

I'm guessing that we wouldn't get asked back



Gentlemen, we are taking over the ship, please take your hands off all ropes and give us custody of the cake



This is men at arms pose #23



existent pirates. Having run out of 'authentic' curses (oh, about 20 seconds), all I could think of was "your mother was a hamster ...".

All the authentically dressed crew took part in the mock attack, and we shot a few of our battle arrows into the Baltic. Unlike nor-



Can we have our arrows back please, mister?



The excitement was too much for some ...

We did some sunset/twilight filming and headed back to port, singing songs with some of the TV and ship



mal battles, they kept coming back on the dinghy (well, obviously we don't have dinghies in our normal battles).
crew along the way. I asked for German seashanties and was told "we don't know any, the English ones are better" (leastways, that's how I remember it).

We'd been at sea for over 12 enjoyable hours.

29TH
SEPTEMBER

Monday, the day we were supposed to be filming the fighting routine we'd not even practiced, dawned wet and windy. At breakfast, the idea of leaving all our bags on board the ship, to save time, became apparent as a flawed concept.



These nuts are wriggling. Are you sure they're normal poppy?

Markus had left his glasses on board. Either that or he's trying to snort muesli.



Mark above shows what the camp breakfast will look like in 2004, with a full range of sausage, cereals and four fruit juices.



It also soon became apparent that 1/ we were going to get wet, and 2/ we were going to get very wet.

Nonetheless, we limbered up with



some traditional Buck's Retinue yoga, in the world-renowned "Blore Heath" exercise. The green figure in the middle is Nanette, freelance microphone holder and the latest convert to "A-



The rain here is just like Swansea

roving". I'll say no more.

Everyone was given a chance to fight for stylish waterproofs, and some had to improvise trousers, as all the remaining ones



were too small. Yes, t'was me.

We also passed a



Je m'appelle Markus

naval torpedo ship, which I later saw on national German news. Not us,



though.

Most of the BBC crew and us took shelter from the rain; not your intrepid reporter, no, he stood on the sodden



deck, when all about, 'cept the captain, had fled. The BBC's problem was now continuity, in that one day they had filmed in the sun, now they were in the



On a hot day such as today, we wear waterproofs, in case of sweat

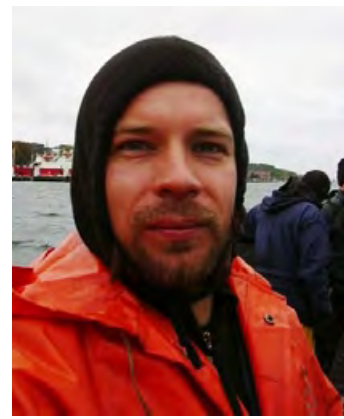
rain. I presume they managed it somehow.



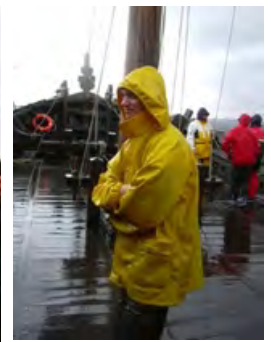
Able Seaman Howes, generally idle bugger (pulls rank).



Able Seaman Hewitt, ropebearer and archer to the duke. Finds bags.



Able Seaman Hemsley, loses ropes. Drinks coffee.



Able Seaman Petz ... no, hang on, that's Mark again, where's Markus?



Andy went off to find the car, saying "I may be gone sometime". It was true, he was gone sometime, and sometime he wasn't. Our trip was coming to a close and none of us wanted to leave. Mar-

Ah yes, Able Seaman Petz, international relationships and hat model. Interpreter. Filmed in oilskins wearing medieval hat (badly).

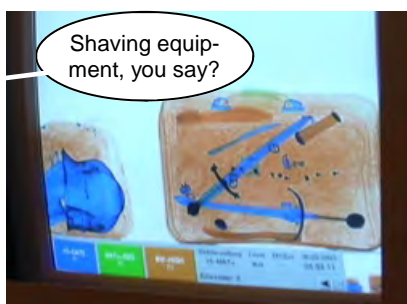
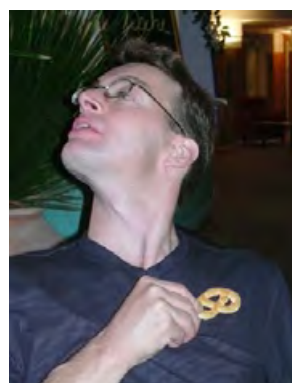
In true film style, the Beeb crew filmed arriving at the boat at the end of both day's filming, necessitating the Captain acting surprised to see them.



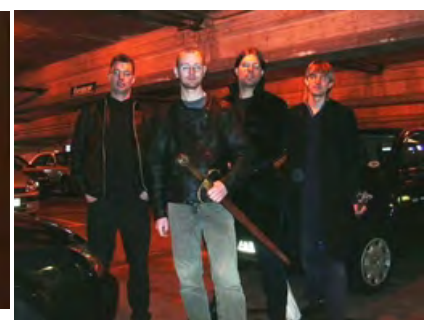
kus had to be prised off the ship (there were some new ladies onboard on the Monday) and then we had to find our way back down through Germany using only a GPS system and our intuition.

Which is why we got lost in Hamburg for over an hour, asked someone where to go, got lost again, sent Markus out to look at a map (whilst still wearing medieval

kit), found the airport, lost the airport ... Then we couldn't find the hotel, which eventually turned up quite a bit further from the airport that "Novatel airport" suggested ...



that didn't belong to us. Mark obligingly put it through the scanner and caused a minor security scare. The lady on the scanner kept pointing at him and saying (in German) "he put it through, it's his"... I started hear-



ing the snap of latex gloves. Andy started imagining darkened rooms. They didn't even care that we'd got a small arsenal in our baggage (see photo)!!!!

The biggest excitement was reserved for Tuesday morning. At the airport things started getting interesting. Somehow, we had picked up a small backpack



GALLERY





GALLERY PART ZWEI



That's it for this special issue.
I apologise to those who consider an entire 9 pages devoted to a short filming trip to Germany a waste of time, but I wanted to document the trip and it seemed fitting to share it with you. It won't stop Andy or Markus going on about it for absolutely hours at the feast, but you can't have everything.

Next issue will contain pictures of more of you ...

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