

2007 Medieval Conference Reports

Damp-a-Con - By Cheryl Fuhlbohm

It was a long drive. Far off the beaten track. The area was damp. Cleared camping sites were not really cleared. Early night on Thursday.

Friday. Ancients day. Cold and still damp. Kitted up in our not-so-good-for-cold-weather Ancient Greek gear. Very shiny. 14 of us marched. Very impressive. Damp. Changed into warmer gear very quickly! Markets after lunch. Even some of the hard men of the

Ancients didn't go all out for dinner. Small marquee. Cosy. Discovered the Routiers Palatial portaloo.

Saturday. Dark Ages Day. Well, we boycotted that and made it Post Medieval Day. 8) Darren and Craig ponced in plate armour. It doesn't make great stealth armour. Still damp too. Fire and Steel had "Ladies Lunch". It was very wrong! Funny, but wrong. Just as wrong as Ellie and Yolanda's revenge that night. Bardic competition. Eggy won. Routiers were entertaining as usual.

Sunday. Crusades Day. Damp. By this time the motto for the weekend had become "Smile and wave, boys. Smile and wave." Or our other Madagascar favourite "If you have any poo, throw it now". Long story. Spent most of the day wandering and talking to people. And eating chocolate. Still damp. Belly dancing and drumming entertainment at dinner.

Monday. High Medieval Day. Damp. But most people were packing and leaving. Only using the Routiers loo by this stage because all the others smelled. Danelaw did not believe in lime. Patches of sunlight!!!! Lots of hugging. Riddles after dinner. The unbelievable precognitive channeling of the amazing James!!! "6 ferrets and a donkey" got us half a point and "Heidi is not the answer" was the answer! Even longer story.

Left early Tuesday morning. Drive home seemed longer than the one there. Many fond memories. Sore cheeks from laughing. That's what it's all about. Then the unpacking, and the washing, and the putting away! Everything was damp. What a surprise.

Cheddar-Con - By Michelle Ferlazzo

Greetings all,

Firstly many thanks need to be given to Danelaw for hosting this event. For those of us who have hosted a conference/conferention/con, we understand full well the amount of work needing to be done before the event. (Except for Roy, who has now been on the committee of 3 in the last 12yrs...)

Conferention was a looong drive through beautiful country but I don't need to see Parliament house for a few more years. It took us 2 days to drive up because all our plans went awry. The scary driveway, was hairy on the way in and hoony on the way out. A great way to spot the local wildlife. We saw birds, wombats and cows...

Danelaw

These guys are good value. Kirk and Dennis particularly. They went to great effort to ensure we were looked after. We had hot showers, hot food, were incredibly helpful and friendly. Some of the younger members very much still into the 'macho' U.S. military behaviour style of 're-enacting' (read - waxing various parts of their anatomies). I told them their behaviour was homo-erotic. They said 'manly'. I said gay... and it went on (Guys you need to read more history - there is some fierce, brave, manly action repeated over the centuries). :)

Dunghaven

The site is amazingly beautiful, we were camped amongst the pine trees which made for interesting walking in the dark but looked great during the day. It rained lots, was still fabulous & by the afternoon sunny. There is a bridge and the fort is on the other side. A 3 yr old quite confidently told me he had 'crossed the bridge and hadn't fallen in'. (In 3yr old speak that means it's all good). Good fort, made of many, many logs but no gate (see Routiers)

Tentage

Spectacular as per usual. Pater Raftos has a new tent, so now there is the Quarf Mahal, Craig's Hippy (it has flowers on it...) Tent and the Byzantine Boudoir (Peter's tent). I think Sandy tried to enter the 'I have a bigger tent than you contest' by putting up an enormous, steel framed A frame tent which looked like it had a truck with a show ride on it parked underneath.

Marquee / Entertainment

Too small for anyone to set up as a group or muck up as the Ancients did last time. This made it rather cosy and I bumped body bits on many occasions with whoever was sitting behind me. This lead to many an interesting conversation mostly with various members of the Ancients.

There was an excellent Bardic Comp on the Sat night and an hilarious Middle Ages Riddles night on the Mon. James Willett decided to psychically answer the riddles and had written the answers before the question was asked - resulting in much hilarity and mirth. (Having seen some of the answers - you needed to be there. What was that about Snorri?....)

Diamond the harp player who was at Corryong last year was in attendance again. I have never seen anyone headbanging to harp playing before but the Fire and Steel group did and strangely enough, it worked.

The remainder of us, conducted a 'Muppets style dancing' ocean scene with candles. Needless to say it was also hilarious. She is now known affectionately known as the Alien Harp Player. (Must have been the blue light on her head & green lights on the harp...)

Sun night the food fight started, for a few minutes lumps of bread were being lobbed between a couple of tables. Uncle Satan, I know I was wearing a turban but my head did not have a target painted on it. The loaf you threw, did bounce off my head rather nicely, from all accounts... :)

The food fight on the last night was hilarious, 100 people throwing bread with a fast and furious pace for 20 mins. It was funny to watch Dennis and Kirk let off steam by lobbing lumps of cooked dough over the crowd. Screaming and giggling ensued and then the 'Halt'. Was fine except for the few of you who continued (naughty people you) until Uncle James put on his Uncle 'Old Bastard' face and finally halted proceedings.

Period Garb

The number of people wearing period clothing and shoes was a little lower than usual. Come on everyone don't you realise how good you look all frocked up properly? The Fire and Steel group looked magnificent. (see Entertainment). And maybe, just maybe your campsite will be voted 'best on field' next conference. Apparently the wearing of period footwear is uncomfortable. I don't know my feet were comfy and dry all weekend. Amazing what you can do with a tin of Dubbin and some sheepskin. The lack of period clothing in some areas, sparked a loud discussion with cries of shame, shame by some of us in the tavern one afternoon. Causing consternation amongst the lesser frocked.

Fire and Steel however provided a demure demeanour by holding a 'Ladies Day'. All of the group were dressed as 'ladies' and I will never forget Darren prancing around during the parade of the 'Ladies' at lunchtime. I think the cocktail umbrellas in the hair sold me.

On the Sat night which was Viking night 3 of us decided we had had enough of being drab and dressed in our Renaissance clothing as protest. Whoo Woo!!!! Cries of 'Look at you - Gorgeous!' followed us and we appreciated it. (Nothing like a bit of bling and cleavage to start the night).

State of the Movement Meeting

Was probably the most quiet and civilised one held in a long time. Everyone was polite and the usual shenanigans non-existent. A couple of comments did encourage snorting from some of the attendees.

The Food

We could not complain from lack of hearty food. It was an interesting mix of times/places (not quite period) and I was looking forward to a nice Roman meal ...

Perki Kemaki

Was once again in attendance. Much coffee and sticky eastern delights doled out to the hung over masses. Many more people enticed by the aromas of chocolate, coffee and sticky honey goodness of baklava..

Tourney and Fort Battle

The usual stoushes, stuff ups (e.g. people falling off, over walls), Stoa boy standing on the top of the Fort filming the proceedings and fun. Tennis balls were allowed to be pitched at the people inside the fort. (Except if you can't throw up hill like me...). Running down ramps to attack the opposition is not wise. Ramp slippery and waiting for you to not pay attention (as one guy found out, one sprained ankle later). Injuries aside there were as per usual -1. (Safer than football, re-enactment is).

Children vs the Routiers

General Willo has been preparing 'ammunition' and studying strategies since Herne's Hill 2005. Went off with a minor hitch and left a few adults bruised and cussing those rascals. Tennis balls and pine cones make great ammunition. Pine cones don't bounce quite as much. Easter eggs are also good but I ran out of those ... :) Loose shrapnel being pinged from over the walls hit someone in the audience. Probably bounced off a Routier's morian or breast plate (or maybe not). In the thick of the fray, I was encouraging the kids to relax and breathe. Mostly it worked. They were all terribly keen to start. General Willo was leading the charge and negotiated the terms of defeat with Captain Ross later in the day. (see BB Comp). I now have a new name - it is the Bastion or Portcullis. There is no gate on the fort - I was the gate AND have the bruises to prove it. After being butted by butts of gun and pike, I was unceremoniously dragged from the fort entrance to be lowered to the ground screaming & laughing.

BB Comp (aka The Arse Off)

The Best Buns Comp has been resurrected after some years in hiatus. Originally it was started in Sokhill by Andrea Willett aka Major Bum Finder General and for a couple of conferences was quite popular. The number of women paying up to be judges was impressive. The number of men lining to judged was even more so. Approx 70 (possibly more) brave souls lined up for judgement day. After much tooting and froing (if your bum is flobby, it's flobby), the final decision was unanimous - John of the Feather in his Hat was awarded first prize (a tavern tab). Honorary mentions go to Alex Besek (Perki Kemaki) and Spike (Routiers) for finalising the top 3.

Leeches

The general allocation was one per person and the competition to dispose of them using the most dastardly method was fierce. Burning won out over and over again - except when the person being leeches was also burned.

Unofficial Conferention Title

Cheddar Con is the unofficial, affectionate name of 2007 Conferention due to the amount of shredded cheese appearing in the first 2 days.

Previous conferention names are – 2005 Herne's Hill -Dustacon, 2003 Porepunkah - Kiddiecon, 2001 Bowraville - Relaxacon, etc

For those of you not in attendance, you were all very much missed.

Overall a good time appears to have been had by all. There was a lot of 'quiet' fun eg Ladies Day, Bardic Comp and Food Fight, Riddles on the last night. Coming from parched Victoria, the rain was much appreciated and added that touch of authenticity. Many of us are enamoured (and in envy, awe...) of such a beautiful and peaceful site. I didn't wish to come home.

Thanks again to Danelaw.

MsHelle 20.04.07

PS If I am incorrect in any instance then I expect to be corrected. In a nice way, in a polite way. Over and out.

If you have been offended by anything I have said - it is tongue in cheek.

2007 Period Encampment Inspection Report

Inspectors: Sven (New Varangian Guard) & John the Wyrn (Grey Company).

Premise: To inspect the encampments of the 2007 Australian Medieval Conference to:

- Rank the encampments on a range of criteria to find the best at conference, the criteria consisted of;
 - o Period to non-period ratio of accommodation (percentage),
 - o Period tents/building accuracy to period meant to be depicted (percentage),
 - o Accoutrements (amount of period accessories measured in broad terminology),
 - o No of non-period items (a list was made),
- Provide comments and feedback both verbally and in a written report on how to improve the presentation.

Encampment and period	Period / Non period ratio	Period accommodation accuracy	Accoutrements	No. of non-period items	Comments
Green Regiment of the London Trained bands (Pike and Musket) - 1647 AD	100 % period	100%	Extensive	Rake, White sliced bread, Milk in carton, modern tent pegs.	Items for commendation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- mile marker- street signs- and loo.
Uppsala - 8 th – 14 th century	20 % period	70%	Nil	Lots	Only the two cabins were looked at in any detail in this inspection, one of which had a turf roof.
Various Vikings (Lynne Simpson etc.)	60% period	60%	Some	Rope handles on chests, bolts holding Viking tent together.	Only one Viking tent with accurate ends.
Fire & Steel - 10 th century, North west Europe	100% period	90%	Extensive	Rope handles on chest, non period shoes, Phillips head screws on bucket, Easter egg.	Items for commendation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Gokstad and Oseberg tents.- Oseberg child chair, bed, lyre.- Linden wood shield.
Ancient Arts Fellowship. 740 – 1066 AD.	40% period	70%	Not many	Bell tents with internal frame, etc. etc., etc.	Items for commendation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- stripped getald.
New Varangian Guard Branches - 9 th – 13 th century.	100% period	80%	More than some.	Modern tent pegs, chest without hinges, hasps or locks	Items for commendation: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- 256 appliqned flowers and squiggles on replica of tent from Maciejowski Bible.- Byzantine wall hangings in Byzantine tent.

Encampment and period	Period / Non period ratio	Period accommodation accuracy	Accoutrements	No. of non-period items	Comments
Sydney Ancients Greek and Romans	100% period	95%	Extensive	Phillips heads screws in standard, plastic container in tent, modern tent pegs on one tent. Screws in shield handles, alum key screws in brazier.	Items for commendation: - Defensive field works. - Tents – Republican Roman, summer campaign. - Tent pegs on majority of tents based on those from Numenati.
Frojel - Viking Gotland	100% period	65%	Some	None period carving on tent poles, pseudo carving of tent pole ends, Phillips head screws and plywood on shaving horse, texta design on bench end.	
Conroi de Bohou	100% period	75%	Some	Sheep skin on welding glove, no locks or hasp on chests, modern tent pegs, steel sleeve on tent poles, cooking pot, use of fly questionable, rope handles on chest, chest without hinges or closure.	Items for commendation: - arms and armour. - costume.
League of Unaligned Re-enactors - 14 th century	100%	95%	Some	Treated pine tent pole, modern hinges on chest, modern tent pegs, no locks or hasps on hutch chests	Items for commendation: - attachment of separate bell tent walls via toggle arrangement.

Comments:

We have come a long way since 1985 in regard to historical representations especially in regard to tents, costumes and accoutrements, and this report represents the current endeavours of the groups listed.

John and I walked around the encampments and inspected those with even a modicum of historical representations, thus we had a larger pool of encampments to inspect than the usual few. The period versus plastic ratio was a crude measure used to indicate the percentage of non-period tentage/building present, 7 out of 10 encampments reached the 100% mark. The percentage accuracy to the period depicted was an indication of how well the group had done in their presentation, only the Pike and Musket achieved 100%, and the Sydney Ancients and the League of Unaligned Re-enactors achieved 95%. The number of accoutrements was represented in the use of terminology (extensive to nil), the top three (Pike and Musket, Sydney Ancients and Fire & Steel) all achieved the 'extensive' label in this category.

All encampments still showed some non-period items. The most common non-period items included;

- modern tent pegs (this needs more research),
- rope handles on chests (on pseudo Viking¹ chests),
- Phillips heads screw (in buckets, a standard and a shaving horse),
- chests without hinges, hasps or locks were also noted but this is a more of a lack of the necessary chest furniture.

¹ Many of the pseudo Viking chest present do not accurately follow the dimension of the extant Viking chests.

Some of worst non-period items included;

- modern tools,
- modern food,
- bell tents with internal metal frames,
- a design on a bench in texta,
- treated pine pole of a bell tent,
- and alum key screws in a brazier.

In the comments section we tried to find those items which deserved special commendations and the list is extensive, highlights include;

- mile stone, street signs and loo (Pike and musket),
- efforts at period houses, one with a turf roof (Uppsala),
- Oseberg tent, chair, bed and lyre (Fire & Steel),
- 256 appliquéd flowers and squiggles on replica of tent from Maciejowski Bible (NVG – Antioch),
- period tent pegs (Sydney Ancients),
- the use of detachable tent walls on a 14th century bell tent (League of Unaligned Re-enactors).

With two years until the next conference there is ample time and incentive to remove these flaws in our representations and replaced them with more period items.

2007 Australian Medieval Conference Archery Results

Organiser: James Murray (Hafdan)		Recorder: Sven							
		<i>Animals</i>			<i>Flying pig</i>				
<i>Name</i>	<i>Club</i>	<i>Rnd 1</i>	<i>Rnd 2</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Rnd 1</i>	<i>Rnd 2</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Overall score</i>	<i>Overall placing's</i>
Andy	Independent	5	13	18	1	4	5	23	=3rd
Peter	Uppsala	1	4	5	7	5	12	17	
Steve	Hafdan	10	9	19	6	0	6	25	2nd
Quarf	NVG - Miklagard	8	7	15	1	3	4	19	
Sven	NVG - Vlachernai	8	7	15	5	3	8	23	=3rd
James	Hafdan	11	15	26	4	5	9	35	1st
Cam	NVG - Vighla	5	9	14	0	4	4	18	
Vera	Hafdan	1	2	3	1	2	3	6	
Nimue	NVG - Antioch	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	
Sharon	Frojel Gotlandica	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	
Chris	Black Ravens	9	1	10	1	3	4	14	
Rob	Sydney Ancients	8	4	12	0	1	1	13	
Hugh	Fire & Steel	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	
Poppy	Sydney Ancients	6	7	13	1	4	5	18	
Sasha	Hafdan	3	2	5	0	0	0	5	
Mark	Unknown	3	2	5	0	0	0	5	

