

Newsletter of the Barony of Politarchopolis

GRIFFINTAYLE

Special Rowany Festival Edition



Welcome to this Special Edition of Griffintayle, reporting and celebrating the actions and achievements of Politarchopolis at Rowany Festival. With coloured woodcuts of the highest quality, and many a “No Fertilizer, There I Was” story, we hope to record for all time the experience, the actions, the glories and the enjoyment that was had by those of our Barony who attended.

Laurel Prize Tourney

Photos courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Baron Drake
OL judges the
Confectionary
Section of the
Stonehenge
Prize at the
Laurel Prize
Tourney



Mistress
Yseult looks
over the
embroidery



Sir Cornelius,
OL, and
Master Alex
the Potter at
the Laurel
Prize Tourney

Court Report

Politarchopolis dominated the Court of King Ædward and Queen Yolande.

On the fields of Combat, Politarchopolis excelled (details can be read in the Sports Pages.) The Heraldic Tourney was gloriously won by the Politarchopolan War Band. Sir Cornelius von Beck won the Fighter Auction Tourney for the second year in a row. The IKAC was won by Lord Sigmund Spellman and the Siege Weapons Battle was won by the Politarchopolis, ably headed by Baron Edmund.

The prize for the Best campsite was finally wrested from the Northern Barbarians and was rightfully awarded to the Pol'polan household of Accipiter.

Master Alex the Potter took the honours in this year's Kingdom A&S Championship, thus disproving the theory that once they are made Peers, Laurels stop trying.

Not only that, but Baron Edmund was awarded the Silver Cinqfoil, the service award of the Barony of Rowany.

All in all, Politarchopolis has much to be proud of. Huzzah!

Royal Prerogatives

A personal experience of Rowany Festival

There I was, standing in the Tavern, watching the Fighters being auctioned, when I was pinched on the bum.

I turned around, only to find Her Majesty walking past. What could I do?

Baroness Leta von Goslar

Oo-ah, Oonagh's a Stunt Peer

This Festival, long term Stitch Bitch and Smarty Skirts, having spent many years perfecting her stitch length, Lady Oonagh O'Neill was elevated to the Peerage and made a member of the Order of the Laurel. Huzzah! She was Laurellled for 16th century Venetian noble women's dress and accessories, with secondary in teaching and research.

But Mistress Oonagh's Laurelling was not an entirely smooth affair, as she describes:

"The medallion, chain and cloak that were used were all 'stunt' stand ins for the real objects. The medallion was not on site and the neither was the chain; the cloak was Her Majesty's responsibility as she was the baby laurel. Unfortunately, she forgot it so Countess Nerissa lent me hers. So I'm the stunt laurel.

The King kept forgetting his lines, then the Queen forgot a few of hers and I went blank on some of mine. The whole thing was very amusing really.

I almost threw up that afternoon and before the ceremony I kept telling myself, 'just breath.' I was concentrating so hard on breathing instead of hyperventilating, not vomiting and not falling over that I didn't hear anyone cheer. Apparently it was a HUGE cheer and comment was made in court that I was obviously a popular choice. *[I suspect the cheer actually deafened her – ed.]* Drake was kind enough to escort me to their majesties and make sure I didn't fall over on the way. He further honoured me by wearing the clothes I sewed for him for his Laurelling."

Photo courtesy of Deborah Murray



King Edward and Queen Yolande make Lady Oonagh a member of the Order of the Laurel

But it seems that it wasn't just the Court performance that was a Comedy of Errors with a wonderful end. Mistress Oonagh continued:

"The offer came in an interesting way. Mathilde wanted to make sure I was going to be on site. I assured her I was going to be there, but only for the Saturday for market and Laurel Tourney. She wanted me to stay into the night but I had to say no, as I have a permanent booking for my Saturdays nights. She joked that she'd be able to keep me there, but I did leave site in the afternoon. Mathilde phoned me about 6 pm demanding to know where I was (I was in a queue for a car wash at the time.) I think she was a little annoyed with me, as she kept on telling me she had told me not to leave. Turns out, this was just after the Laurels' meeting. Not only had I left site without telling

her, I had forgotten I was supposed to do her hair for the Laurels' Frock Off that evening. Oops!

The next day I got a phone call from my apprentice sister asking for extra blankets. Mathilde was going to come out and get them just after lunch.

This was in fact a ruse. She and Their Majesties and assorted other Laurels were going to pack into cars, drive out to my house and ask me. The blanket thing was to make sure I would be home.

But, not knowing that, the timing really didn't suit me so I offered to take the blankets out to site later that afternoon, along with anything else they wanted. This apparently caused a flap with getting every one there in time.

I arrived on site and there were Stephen and Lochlan at the constables desk to greet me. I thought "this is nice" as I didn't have to carry the blankets and ice. I walked into the dining pavilion and there were Their Majesties and a heap of Laurels. I thought I knew what was happening but didn't want to get my myself all worked up so I tried to continue like nothing was going on.

As luck had it there was a vacant chair next to Her Majesty - funny that! There was a bit of polite small talk, then Queen Yolande suggested to Mathilde that she should fill me in on what had previously been discussed. Mathilde explained that the Crown and the Laurel Counsel would like to invite me to join the order. I burst out laughing for about five minutes. Stephen crowed 'See I was right' - he had said that my reaction would be to laugh. Of course, I said that I would be honoured to join them.

The King looked at me after accepting and asked, 'So when do you want to be done?'

I looked straight back at him and asked,

'Do you have a court this afternoon?'

Mathilde and Their Majesties' eyes became like saucers and their jaws dropped as she said

'Umm yes'.

Her Majesty did suggested I could do it three weeks later in Politarchopolis if I wanted, I didn't have to do it now. And didn't I want to make a new frock for the occasion? But Mathilde pointed out that the dress I was wearing was in fact a new dress that I hadn't worn to an event. *She* had, but I hadn't.

So I suppose that was my gottcha on them in a way, unintentional of course.

Laurels Get Sexi

It was late in the afternoon, Court was in full swing and Their Majesties decided that both They and the populace needed a little musical relief. They thus summoned forth Their Choir.

They noticed that huddled amongst the august singers lurked one who was...different. They puzzled over this. Was it because he sang neither Soprano nor Alto?

No.

Was it because he was the sole male amongst this group feminine beauty?

No.

Was it because he was taller than everyone else?
Hmmm, true, but that wasn't it...

Their Majesties' brows were furrowed as they pondered the issue, until with a blinding flash, they realised the problem.

He was ruining their plans for an All Laurel Choir.

Thus they summoned Crispin Sexi, singer, musician and composer extraordinaire, and explained the problem to him. He would have to join the Order of the Laurel or leave the Choir.

The populace roared their approval of his Laurelling. (Some later claimed that this was to save the Choir from being top heavy in tone, but none could doubt the genuine approval of the crowd at the time.)

And thus, surrounded by his Peers, Crispin was made Master Sexi.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Master Crispin Sexi practices for future glory by wearing Countess Portia's coronet.

The Arts

Numerous classes were held by various gentles from Politarchopolis.

Mistress Sybille held several dance classes which we understand were well received. Perhaps Politarchopolis has become used to this gracious Lady's skills upon the dance floor, but those from other groups commented on her grace and teaching skills.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Lord Anton de Stoc gets down to the nitty gritty in his class on ...

Lord Anton de Stoc gave several classes on some of his favourite topics – "Seizing Power in Italy, a Practical Guide", "Applied Philosophy and Winning Crown", and "Do Poetry the Authentic way – Cheat".

He spoke with his usual passion, and seemed to hold his classes enthralled. As always, his breadth of understanding and knowledge on his chosen topic was amazing.

Photos courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Master Alex the Potter shows how to make a Roman kiln. Below is the kiln further on in construction. Note that as the kiln builds up, earth is piled around it.



Despite a late start, Master Alex the Potter constructed a Roman Kiln with some eager help. His class plan was dampened slightly by the fire ban, but the kiln progressed well, as the photos show.

Constructed from old bricks and the local clay, the design was surprisingly simple and easy to build.

It is hoped that next year conditions will allow the kiln to be used.

What Happens At Festival If You Don't Fight?

A personal experience of Rowany Festival

My festival contribution was definitely on the quiet side but I enjoyed it very much all the same.

Aided by my friend Alison I ran three children's' collegia: Pouch Making on Friday, Basic Heraldry on Sunday and Beading (in the pseudo-Elizabethan manner) on Monday.

Fortunately for us, on the Friday most of the children were accompanied by an adult since I find that very few primary schools have anything to do with needle and thread these days and many children have no idea at all about sewing, thus chaotic fun ensued -- but I saw them wearing their pouches throughout Festival which was great. It would have been nice to do a follow up decorate-your-pouch session, but we went overtime as it was.

The Heraldry was fun too, there were some incredibly complex and imaginative devices designed, and two gentlemen with Real Knowledge of Heraldry turned up and were most helpful and interesting. I enjoyed making up the handout for that one.

Beading was good too, but much less well attended due to several children having vested interest in the Fighter Auction Tourney. Still, there were some beautiful creations.

I loved having the collegia to focus on during Festival, I'm pretty sure the children enjoyed them too and I'm looking forward to trying something different next year (I'm thinking masks and spinning tops...)

Another personal highlight was attending the Lampwork beads collegium and workshop - I got to make two!

I don't know who organised the children's boffer tourney and war but my young son had the best time ever so I am **very** grateful to them.

Averil of Ambledune (Danni Crawford)

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Lady Caterina's Jewellery class

Lady Caterina's Jewellery class proved to be VERY popular, with her pupils filling the A&S tent and crowding out the door.

Master Hrólfr's juggling classes were also very well attended, with a large number of children attending as well as several adults. Balls went flying everywhere as beginners tried to master the basic elements of keeping things in the air.

We have yet to confirm that Master Del, the Kingdom Seneschal, is planning to make attendance to Master Hrólfr's classes compulsory for all new seneschals.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Master Hrólfr teaching juggling

Entertainment had a decidedly Politarchopolitan feel this Festival. Not only is the Laurel Choir now distinctly Griffinish, but several Pol'polans had honourable mentions in the Fields of Entertainment.

The Stonehenge Tourney Competition for pre-1500 entertainment saw Lord Anton de Stoc make use of his prestigious talents for research. His entry won an honourable mention, and much praise from Master Del, who recognised many of the sources' influences. {See page 5 for the work itself.}

Every year at Festival, the Entertainer's Guild hold a competition to find their new Guild Champion. The outgoing Champion, Lady Finnabhair, from Stowe on the Wowlde, said that the decision to pick her successor was one of the hardest she has had to make. She narrowed her choice down to Finnarr from Rowany, Lord Anton de Stoc and Baron Karl Faustus von Aachen of Politarchopolis. The standard of performance was high, and although the Championship was finally awarded to Finnarr, the results were very close. She wished to make honourable mention of both Pol'polans.

During lulls in Court (and more often for his own amusement) Master Hrólfr leapt in to the gap to amuse the populace with his devilish skills with the Diablo, and showed off his juggling prowess to the amazement of many. The oohs and ahs of the watching crowd at times seemed louder than the huzzahs that followed the Court.

On Court ; a Satire by Anton de Stoc

Must I always be stuck in the audience
at these talking shops,
never up on the platform myself,
taking it out on Cornelius
for the times he's bored me to death
with his ranting speeches ?
Is Alfar to get off scot-free,
after inflicting his sense of humour on me,
or Ædward his silences ?
Is there no recompense for the days wasted by prolix
Yolande ?
And what about that drunk Uther -
each sitting place filled up, solid, top to bottom,
for hour on hour, and still we weren't finished.
Unlike that pile of bottles, of course.
He chose a bottomless gullet over writing well enough to
sign his name.

I know all the oaths as well as I know my own name,
and you get the same stuff from them all,
established crown or raw beginner alike.
I ask you, can we not hear
"And I swear to serve you, my undoubted crown,
in the same way I served your predecessor",
and then we can go back to the roast pig,
the stuffed mushrooms, the barely watered wine,
and the important matter of finding agreeable company for
the night.

I too have winced at my Crown's behaviour,
and concocted "Advice to the Crown"
Let the despot retire into private life,
take a good deep breath,
then return and execute his tormentors.

But if this would be done,
then who would register names and devices ?
And if so, would any of us,
the populace and peers of Lochac
care, or even notice ?

These questions I must leave to the scribbling of third-rate
philosophers,
or at least to our beloved Seneschal.

Speaking of scribbling, Lochac is, I believe,
immune to that cursed race of informers,
who for cash will represent the great, good and just
to some tyrant's lickspittle for trial.

In Lochac, of course, this would never happen,
for the populace are clearly incapable
of writing a recommendation,
let alone a denunciation.

The just may thus sleep soundly,
for all would-be informers
will regard it as another's duty to write that vital letter.

But it now must be asked,
are these themes I expound well worthy of Horace's pen ?
Would Juvenal attack them as well?

Of course not, such a thing would never happen.
Not with the material provided by the private lives of our

public figures.

But good taste and morality prevent me
from using actual lives as grist for my mill.

Should I then fabricate material,
with which to show moral lessons ?

The answer, my friends, is if I did that,
I would find what I thought I had created from whole
cloth,
to have happened last year in Stormhold, or Innilgard,
or in some other place.

So for titillation or gossip you must go elsewhere ;
for titillation, Martial is pretty good,
and Ovid has his moments.

As for the other,
teaching Lochacers where to find gossip
is like teaching a fish where to find water.

So we must go back to our self-appointed task,
of ploughing that furrow that Horace began,
and Juvenal widened,
and issue the pious hope that in showing the Kingdom as it
is,
we may resolve to improve it's faults.

Notes on the composition:

Satire is material designed to peel the public face off a society or
a person, to bring attention to faults that most people are too
polite (or politic) to mention.

My piece is based heavily on the Roman satirist Juvenal,
particularly his first and fourth satires. The major exception is I
don't name names on the really harsh stuff(*), which Juvenal did
with abandon (he also probably got a free trip to Egypt, and was
lucky he didn't get the Roman equivalent of a nine-millimetre
headache).

Style-wise, Juvenal wrote in achingly good six-syllable Latin,
with exquisite control of meter. I just can't do that in English, so
I've followed a number of Juvenal's translators and done work in
something that is almost but not quite prose.

Satire isn't really "medieval" as such. It's got a long and deep
tradition among the Ancients (some of Aristotle's thoughts about
comedy in *On Poetry* are pretty clearly about stuff we would
recognise as satire ; Horace and Juvenal are the ones to read as
far as Roman satire goes), and it does pop it's head up
occasionally before the Early Modern (I'm thinking of the *Ship
of Fools*, and some of the *Canterbury Tales* floats really close to
satire e.g. it's more anticlerical bits), but the revival of satire
needs the secular literate culture of the Early Modern to revive.

There is quite a bit of good 16thC English satire, notably George
Gascoigne's *The Steele Glass* and *De Bellum Inexpertis*. Of
course, writing the stuff he did, George Gascoigne never got
within coo-ee of serious patronage at Court.

(*) Except for Uther the Drunk, of course. For the record, there is
stuff I wrote that didn't make publication e.g. "It is said St
Augustine read Latin one-handed, with a forefinger tracing each
word. <deleted as I want to keep my kneecaps> also reads Latin
one-handed, but for very different reasons."

Mmm, Tasty Words

A personal experience of Rowany Festival

I was at the Tavern on Sunday night (Monday morning?) after a long evening drinking Long Island Iced Teas at Blue Feather. Claire and I wandered in, in search of Wee Jamie. We found him at the bar. As you would.

The lonely Bar Menches were not as pleased to see us as Weej was – they scolded us off as Harlots and rejoiced as we departed.

They were still congratulating themselves the next day when Weej mentioned to them that we had both volunteered to get our Responsible Service of Alcohol certificates so we could help next year.

Catulla Cinaeden

Politarchopolan builder gets carried away

A personal experience of Rowany Festival

So there I was, and St Florian needed a Fire-ban approved enclosed fireplace to run their chuffers. So a barrow load of stone, some mud and the cast iron seat of an old harrow became a little bronze age pit forge – and it was good!

But it was not enough! It was Sunday lunchtime when we began to get more stone, and more stone, and still more stone. When the dust began to settle after sundown on Monday, we had two tonne of stone in a Bronze Age keyhole smelter with two chuffers and pizza oven.

Iarnulfr Thorolfsson

Market News

The Merchants of Politarchopolis did well at Festival. The Saturday Market was packed, as usual.

Oonagh sold her usual assortments of highly wearable bits and pieces, Sir Cornelius was spotted selling armour and Crispin was also seen selling an assortment of bits and pieces of an entertaining nature.

photo courtesy of Deborah Murray



Oonagh merchanting at Market

As always, Market day was a shoppers delight and many bargains were picked up by the shopping throng. There was a wide selection of goods on offer, with gems, jewellery, swords, armour, books, leather, horn goods, toys and games. One merchant made a small killing on large fans, which were bought by those suffering from the heat.

The Students of St Aldhelm held a sausage sizzle to raise money for the College, and many a fighter was seen grabbing bites of sausage and fried onion between bouts.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Master Alex's Flaming Gargoyle Pottery once more had a permanent stall, to the great relief of many who had lost, broken or forgotten to pack their goblets and jugs.

Yet again, there were many comments on the high standards of his wares, and many flocked to his stall.

Customers peruse the wares on sale at the Flaming Gargoyle Pottery

Lord (and later Master) Crispin also had a permanent stall, catering to a select number of discriminating gentles who did not wish to worry about feeding themselves this Festival. We are assured that Crispin's Kitchen was well received.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Master Crispin with some satisfied customers in Crispin's Kitchen.

Burger Khan

Lochiel has of late taken on an Eastern feel. Yurts have sprung up in their campsite, and on Friday night they invited all and sundry to join them in a feast of Mongolian food. Served were spiced meat cakes with salad and a special yoghurt-and-mint sauce, wrapped in flat bread, which of course had to be referred to as Burger Khan. A Burger Khan Hat made of cardboard was worn by anyone

who claimed it was their birthday and there was an empty box that we presume once held an unhappy meal.

Although thickshakes weren't provided, Master Drake stepped up to the plate with his Kumiss (fermented milk). This is a drink with obvious character - during the fermenting process it tried to escape from the fermenter in a spectacular fashion. In fact, Lady Blodeuwedd has been in discussion with Baron Edmund about the feasibility of fermenting milk in sealed leather bags and thus creating milk bombs to be fired from trebuchets.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Severed heads hang from the Complaints Department of Burger Khan in the Lochiel campsite.

Despite it's requirement to be shaken regularly to stop it separating, the kumiss proved to be quite pleasant. Many commented on it's vast superiority to Drake's last attempt and it was generally agreed that provided you didn't let it stand too long, it was rather pleasant. Test runs by brave persons of little discrimination have confirmed that it also works well on Coco Pops. We have not yet received confirmation that a Kumiss Marguerita is in fact possible, let alone drinkable.

So successful has Burger Khan proved that Lochiel is planning to use them to cater for their Renn Faire Barbarian Party at next year's Festival.

Griffintayle Special

See our special pull out to make your own
Burger Khan Unhappy Meal Box!

Offer good for box only. To get contents, make something yourself...

The Gilded Leek

Rumours, Gossip and all the stuff we couldn't substantiate, or weren't sure we wanted to believe.

Leofric from Aneala claims possession of photos that prove Wystan of St Florian went in to fight with a codpiece strapped to his head. Trust a Northerner not to know one end from the other.

The Leek has heard that allegations were made at the Laurel Council that Fertility Potions were slipped into the chocolate at the Twelfth Night meeting. Although circumstantial evidence grows stronger, we believe no one has yet owned up to the deed.

Which Pol'polan Knight of French persuasion was found with an ear full of Tequila? We decline to make comment on how his Squire cleaned the said ear out.

An anonymous source dropped an interesting niblet the Leek's way: "It was interesting watching the comments of Baron St Florian de la Riviere change from 'Now all we need is a bottle of rum to christen the bridge' to 'A bottle of rum for the first couple to christen the bridge, but you must have three members of the populace or one peer, who are not involved in the act, as witnesses.'" Ask Gregory du Belmont for details of who won the rum.

We heard whispers from the Palantine Barony of the Far West (also known as Guam) that a certain Florentine Lady (oh alright, it was Isabella Francesca Di Firenze) was most jealous of the beauty and grace with which lords Cadogan and Fredriek wore their dresses and the aplomb with which they displayed their décolletage.

Every One's Gotta Learn Sometime...

A personal experience of Rowany Festival

2am on Friday morning, having arrived late from a party at Yass, I asked many Tavern folk where Politarchopolis was camping but no one seemed to know. One pointed me in a vague direction, where I spotted a tent that looked like mine. Unfortunately the tent was occupied by an irate camper!

I then decided to sleep for the one night in a big empty tent with a wooden floor, leaving my pack and boots on a convenient chair inside. When I awoke in the morning, I was rounded on by an irate SCA member who was unimpressed that my boots and pack were on the Royal Throne. I followed his advice and left immediately.

Stefan the Newbie.

Best Buns And Not A Bakery In Sight!

A personal experience of Rowany Festival

It was Sunday night and I was out camp hopping with an entourage. At Mordenvale's campsite, we witnessed Carbeus win the "Best Buns" in Mordenvale Competition.

But this was only because the judge, Mistress Margie of Glen Mor, was blindfolded and as she moved down the line Bran Torc Dude Mac Brude was turned to face the other way!

Stephen

Quotes of Note:

"I've been a shieldman, I've been a pikeman. Pike's better!" Lord Adair

"Politarchopolis will go down..."

Baroness Leta at the start of the Heraldic Tourney.

"Feel inside my muff, it's so soft and warm."

Countess Nerissa

"Honey, I want to [expletive deleted] you so much!"

Baron Drake, talking rather loudly in his sleep, having dozed off during the Lochiel Household Feast

The Trouble With Having a New Bridge...

By Master Crispin Sexi

I went to St Florian early one morning,
Hey down-a-down folly, folly down hey,
But I never got to the end of my journey,
The sign said "Aneala" and I lost my way.

I went to St Florian early one morning,
Hey down-a-down folly, folly down hey,
But I never got to the end of my journey,
The trolls on the bridge had been busy that day.

I went to St Florian early one morning,
Hey down-a-down folly, folly down hey,
But I never got to the end of my journey,
A large harvest idol was blocking the way.

I went to St Florian late in the evening,
Gone was the flour, the chalk and the hay,
I couldn't remember why I'd made the journey,
So hey down-a-down folly, folly down hey.

The complications of having little children in court

A personal experience of Rowany Festival

Surely the mothers amongst our fair land would have had no idea when starting on the road to motherhood what a truly adventurous road it would be. Particularly when it came to events and the formality of court.

It is all very well when you child is still suckling, or happy to gurgle quietly in your lap; no, the real problems arise when your child learns to walk and talk. Prime examples of this were seen at the various courts at this year's Rowany Festival.

For instance a friend of the family is called up to court and your daughter decides to follow. Young children deciding to play chases in the midst of the throne room, or in the case of ourselves, repeated diminutive cheers of "hip hip HUZZAH!" during His Majesty's speeches.

Wonderful and entertaining it may have been; it was also acutely embarrassing on our part. So now begins the laborious process of teaching court etiquette to two year olds.

HIP HIP HUZZAH.

Lady Darby and Lady Könusch

Crossroads Site

Much work was done by members of the Barony in the lead up to Festival to help improve the site. Working bees saw grass mown, stones moved, paths laid out and trees planted (most of which unfortunately dried in the drought.)

Perhaps the most impressive was the Guildhall, which went from being a skeleton structure last year to a beautiful building, complete with tiled roof and nearly finished walls.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



The Guildhall

Several performances were held in here. St Florian performed it's play, which has become a much anticipated annual event. The performance section of the Stonehenge Competitions were also held in the Guildhall.

The acoustics have proved quite good for music. Several choral rehearsals were held here, and the wood floor proved good for dancing.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Inside the Guildhall

Another permanent structure was the wooden bridge over the creek to the St Florian campsite. (See The Gilded Leek for gossip about this structure.)

Photo courtesy of Fiona Huxley



The new wooden bridge over the creek. Note St Florian's Straw Man being very Folk Lore and suggestive to the right.

But more work needs to be done. Most of the trees have died due to the drought and more need to be planted. Because the soil is so degraded in many places, new trees need to be planted with top quality compost if they are to have a chance to survive. So start composting and planting those acorns now!

Social Pages

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Lord Alessandro and Lady Isabel stop for a moment of affection outside the Guildhall



Baron Steven strikes an impressive pose.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Baron Karl Faustus von Aachen takes a short break to wet his whistle whilst Heraldng.

Countess Portia in Viking stops to chat with Baron Drake in Tudor and Lord Drogo of Arrowsreach in Saxon.

Photo courtesy of Karen Carlisle.



Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Lord Jonathon of Loch Swan shakes Drake's Kumiss to stop it separating in the Lochiel campsite. Gentles visiting Lochiel described the fermented milk drink as "Riesling flavoured smoothy" and "err, interesting..."



Felix Metallus at
the Heraldic
Tourney

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies

Lord Gavin
the
Gruesome
caught
wearing
something
vaguely
tasteful,
ruining a
hard
earned
twelve year
reputation
in the
process.



Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Lord Rodri displaying
the Politarchopolis
Griffin Tabard of War,
being martial in the
dying rays of sunset.

Master Hrólfr
amuses the crowds
at court until their
Majesties arrive.

We are assured that
he does not practice
the black arts and
that there is nothing
devilish in his skills.



Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Mistress
Monique
coming to
court.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies

Mistress
Mathilde
judging the
Pre-15th
Century Play
performances
in the
Stonehenge
competition.



Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Mistress Rohese poses in yet another stunning hat.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Baroness Leta and her lady-in-waiting, Lady Madeleine, fascinated by the Heraldic Tourney and hanging on every blow...really.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



The sign says it all! The gateway to the Politarchopolis Baronial campsite.

Photo courtesy of Mel Blakely



Loch Swan the Elder and Loch Swan the Younger. Sir Gregory and Lord Jonathon at the Fighter Auction Tourney.

Photo courtesy of Fiona Huxley



Baron Edmund takes a breather during the Heraldic Tourney

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Lord Owen and Don François at the Baroness' Rapier Tourney

SPORTS PAGES

Some Good Advice

A personal experience of Rowany Festival

There I was... just in time to see Baron Edmund and Baron Stephen carve up Viscount Sir Boris – Yay!

Never give a Baron a REALLY long pole!

Mistress Mathilde

Heraldic Tourney

On Saturday the Heraldic Tourney was held. The Politarchopolan forces, gloriously arrayed in red and bravely displaying the Griffin of Politarchopolis, were victorious over six other war bands. Also fighting, as a separate unit, was Descartes, joined for the day by Sir Gregory of Loch Swan.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Lord Adair armed for the Heraldic Tourney

However, his son, the noble young warrior Lord Jonathon of Loch Swan was fighting for the main force of Politarchopolis. It seems that the young cob has been flexing his muscles and striving for mastery. Furious that his son and heir should fight under another's command and feeling that Jonathon needed to be taught his place, when Descartes was drawn to fight against Politarchopolis, Sir Gregory took to the field and issued a challenge.

The noble knight set a challenge to his rebellious son. "I am still head of the household," he bellowed, "and you will learn your place! If you think you can challenge my authority in my own house, you can face my challenge on the field!"

Thus was the dire challenge laid, but Lord Jonathon is his father's son and would never back down from a challenge,

no matter from whom it came. He picked up his shield and sword and walked out onto the field.

The watching crowds were hushed as the two met. Father and son faced each other. Age and experience will tell, but sometimes youthful optimism will beat experienced caution. Sir Gregory waited for his opportunity to place a single, winning blow, and in waiting, lost the bout, for Jonathon swooped in with a strike fast as lightning. The crowd no less than the victor were stunned as Sir Gregory fell under Lord Jonathon's victorious blow. And thus Lord Jonathon walked from the field Master of the House of Loch Swan.

And yet, though his mastery of his own house was gone, Sir Gregory seemed untroubled. Later that evening, as he feasted with friends, he was overheard to say "He can have the mortgage too!"

Photo courtesy of Fiona Huxley



Descartes at the Heraldic Tourney, Sir Gregory of Loch Swan on the left.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



The Banner of the Politarchopolis War band

When the Griffin Forces came up against the Royal Household, loyalty to the Crown had to be laid aside for the greater glory of Politarchopolis!

There was a valiant struggle, but it seems that the Mighty Griffins were destined to prevail.

Lord Rodri Ysgolaig reported that at one point, his Majesty King Ædward threw himself at the Politarchopolis forces in an attempt to save his Household. But this desperate bid to use the sacrosanct status of the Royal Body was of no use, and at the last, of the Royal Household only Simon stood against seven Pol'polan fighters.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Politarchopolis is victorious on the field.

Baron Edmund led his noble troops into battle wearing a spectacular tabard of silken brocade.

This tabard was a gift from the Barony of Stormhold. So inspired were the Warriors of the Griffin by this shining emblem worn by their leader that they gloriously beat the Stormholders into ignominious defeat.

Photo courtesy of Fiona Huxley



Baron Edmund wears the gift from Stormhold that inspired his fighters to stomp the Stormholders into the ground

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



The Pol'polan forces prepare for their next bout in the Heraldic Tourney.

Viscount Bran of Lochiel arming for the Heraldic Tourney



Photos courtesy of Fiona Huxley.



White Company versus Descartes

A Fearful Knight

A personal experience of Rowany Festival

In one of the 'heavy only' battles, my knight, Sir Philipe, and I broke off from the main force alone.

We flanked to the left and were surprised to find a unit of around fifteen people turning to face us!

We must have looked pretty damn scary – how wrong can people be.

Lady Alesia de Cheval Blanc

Siege Weapons

Politarchopolis set the evil Northern Hordes a trembling in their boots as we showed our mighty prowess in the field of large scale machinery with which to fling things.

So impressive were the skill and enthusiasm of Baron Edmund that he was promptly made Deputy Siege Marshal to the Kingdom.

Much skill was shown on the day and Politarchopolis was finally victorious over all comers. With the passion and dedication shown by many of the Barony to the Art of the Siege Engine, we pity any who would try to shut their city gates against our forces.

Photo courtesy of Fiona Huxley



Politarchopolis and the opposition.

Many tales were told in the tavern later by those warriors who survived the bloody day. Gregory du Belmont recalled one particularly spectacular shot where a single ballista bolt shot killed four fighters, removing the head of one, piercing the shields of two more fatally and wounding them before finally coming to rest in the body of the forth.

Photo courtesy of Fiona Huxley



Baron Edmund and Lord Rodri test the ballista for the Siege Marshals

Not all of the Politarchopolan warriors fought for the same cause however. Continuing our long tradition of mercenary considerations and fighting for the love of it, Politarchopolan warriors both attacked and defended the Fort. But comradeship still prevails, as Lord Heinrich Maximillian von Hesse of the Black Legion recalls.

"I was defending the Fort," he said, "when I saw Baron Edmund fire a bolt high in the air, aiming straight at me. But loving life as I do, I stepped sideways and the bolt passed me, no doubt as his Excellency had intend it to.

Sadly, I forgot to warn the Mordenvalian behind me, who lost his life."

Maxx sniggered slightly and finished his drink. There were general murmurs that Northerners deserve all they get, and the spirit of comradeship within the Barony was certainly maintained.

Photo courtesy of Fiona Huxley



Testing the length of the flight. Left of top centre you can see the bolt in flight.

Indeed, mercenary considerations seemed long forgotten, regardless of which side warriors fought. Hamish Bearshoulders of Ynys Fawr joined the Politarchopolan fighters in the tavern and recounted this tale with much glee:

"There I was on the war field. I had been prepaid a bounty by a particularly trusting Politarchopolan lord, only to find that lo! My quarry was on my own side. I said unto my trusty prey, 'My lord, your eye slot is very narrow, and mine is broad. Shall I assist you by warning you of the imminent arrive of enemy fire?' He said unto me, 'Yey verily, Okay.'

And so, during the battle when I cried left the trusting archer leapt left and dodged the arrow and when I cried right he jumped right and our arrangement went well and his trust in me grew and our arrangement worked well for all concerned.

Until, that is, that I espied one of Baron Edmund's ballista bolts streaking towards us as the trusting archer stood behind me. My payment was to be earned – at the last moment I dextrously sidestepped and as my trusting quarry cried 'You bastard!' the ballista bolt caught him right between the eyes."

Fighter Auction

The Fighter Auction tourney saw Politarchopolis well represented, where Sir Gregory, Lord Jonathon, Lord Adair, Viscount Bran, and Baron Edmund all fought well.

Sir Brusi was unable to enter due to injury (rumour says Northern assassins tried to cut his arm off with a rusty bread knife. Slightly more reliable rumour says the injury was self inflicted with a stanley knife) but he purchased Lord Wolfe. Obviously this had a stirring effect, as Wolfe got through to the Seventh round, defeating two knights in the process.

Lord Wolfe kneels to salute his purchaser, Sir Brusi, in the Fighter Auction Tourney.



Photo courtesy of Adam Reeve

Having paid for this noble warrior, some might say in blood, Sir Brusi was well pleased with the success of his purchase.

Photo courtesy of Fiona Huxley



The Battle of the Barons – Baron Edmund meets Baron Stephen

Photo courtesy of Mel Buckley



Lord Wolfe warming up with Lord Stephen Glaube of St Florian de la Riviere

Sir Cornelius Von Beck won the Tourney for the second year running, in a field of nearly 130 fighters. Thus Politarchopolis was represented at every level.

Photo courtesy of Mel Buckley



Lord Jonathon of Loch Swan in the Fighter Auction Tourney

Archery

Continuing our dominance of the Field of War, the Politarchopolan Archers placed extremely well in the Inter Kingdom Archery Competition (IKAC).

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



In fact, in the Open section, the top five placing Archers were all Pol'polan!

Lord Sigmund Spellman had an amazing day's shooting, and placed first. Huzzah!

Lord Sigmund Spellman, winner of the IKAC

As always, there were numerous battles where archery was a vital part of the event and both Heavy and Light Infantry agreed this year's mixed battles were outstanding.

In addition, there were two Agincourt Runs this year. An Agincourt Run, of course, is where the Heavy Infantry face the Light Infantry. Whilst the various Heavy fighters I spoke to had mixed feelings about this event ("Now I know how fish in a barrel feel..") the word from the archers is "lots of fun!"

Rapier

There were several chances for the proponents of the Art of Rapier to shine at this year's Festival. There were both one-on-one bouts and melees; the largest of the tourneys fielded 28 fighters.

Any who still thought that this form of sword play is the country cousin of the more heavily armoured fighters were put in their place with the skill and above all the courtesy shown by the Fencers at this year's Rapier Tourneys.

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Don François meets Don Ibn Jaleel upon the Rapier field

It was proven beyond any doubt that chivalry is not the preserve of just the Knights! Many acts of courtesy, self sacrifice, displays of honour and noble flourishes were seen, and many of the spectators walked away well pleased with what they had seen.

One of Politarchopolis's own, Boris the Black, had announced his intention to Play His Prize – that is, to meet all challenges from any member of the Guild of Fence, to prove his worth and to rise within the Guild's Rank. No one who had seen his skill before was surprised by the ease with which he attained his Journeyman's badge. Huzzah!

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



Owen Cantor ap Hugh faces Boris the Black

Photo courtesy of Anwyn Davies



The Baronesses at the Baroness' Rapier Tourney.

On the Saturday was the Baroness' Tourney, held in honour of the Baronesses of Lochac. Honour and Chivalry was the norm upon the field, and off, as the Fighters stopped their preparations to help raise a huge shade-roof to protect the fair skins of the Ladies they fought to honour.

A new trend was introduced to the Art of Fence this year – that of hand guns fired by rubber bands. Trialled on the melee on the final day, they proved to be both effective and popular, and seem set to become a permanent part of the armoury.

Anybody wishing to volunteer as Pikemen or Musketeers in the Gore Street Ward, Don François wants YOU!



I see Edmund is having technical problems with his Ballista again...

From the Chronicler

This Special Edition of the Griffintayle could not have been done without the help of many people who donated photographs, commentary, experiences and other material.

Special thanks must go to her Excellency, Baroness Leta, who collected stories from the populace at the Tavern Feast when I was unable to attend and who donated many photographs, along with Lady Amelot.

As always, deepest gratitude to Lord Rodri, Webwright. This edition proved to be more complicated than most, and as always he has risen to the challenge!

Iechyd da,
Lady Blodeuwedd y Gath.

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