

# The Newcastle Courant

St. Matthew's Guild of Historical Actors

April 2002

Making History Fun Since 1565!

## OFFICERS

### **Directors:**

Dan Lewis 447-3423  
Nathan Schmidt 419-1395  
Rebecca Bocchicchio 624-7790

### **President:**

Liz Martin 419-1395

### **Vice-President:**

Melinda Coy 635-8232

### **Treasurer:**

Cathy Rowe (530) 432-7835

### **Secretary:**

Kathy Stefun 483-2642

## COMMITTEE HEADS

### **New Members:**

Wendy Nunes 276-7340

### **Education:**

### **Costume:**

Rebecca Bocchicchio 624-7790

### **Construction:**

Mike Nunes 726-8522

### **Plague Rat Dancers:**

Lola Pudinski 836-0837

### **SITCOM:**

Melinda Coy 635-8232

### **Scots:**

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### **Newsletter:**

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Nathan Schmidt  
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## Thoughts From The President

Wow! It's April already. Where does the time go? It seems just last week that we were talking about the idea of the Weekend Workshop and now it's almost here! I am so excited about this opportunity to learn some new ideas and to improve my skills. I hope you are as excited as well. I am really hoping for 100% turn out, so if you are still on the fence or haven't gotten your application in yet, there is still time! We have great people coming in to work with us, Chris Morgan, from Knights of St. John and Kevin Kaos, Proctor Bumby himself!, from St. Christina's. These and more, along with the talent we have within the guild should help to make this the best training ever. There has been a tremendous amount of time and effort put in to bring this all together so I truly hope everyone takes advantage of this great opportunity. I mean, come on - it's FREE and there will be chocolate.

I also want to remind you that this is the annual meeting. We will be taking a directors vote and voting on the budget. If you are a journeyman cannot make it, please mail (P.O. Box 60136, Sac 95860) or send your ballot with someone who will be there.

In other news, I would like to welcome Melinda Coy into the position of Vice-President. In a moment of self sacrifice (or was it the hang-over?) she offered to take on the job that John Adams, as Vice-President of the United States, once called "a pernicious and useless office"! Okay, so much for meaningful quotes. I am sure she will do well in her new position and I am looking forward to working with her. Also, don't forget that the VP is in charge of the St. Matt's award presentation Saturday night of Folsom Faire. So if you notice items throughout the year that should be recognized, let her know.

Our next meeting will be the 2nd Saturday in May as the new Mayfaire in Placerville is our usual weekend. We will be meeting at 9 am at the Rowe's in Rio Linda to pull out what we need for our first faire. Then we're back to our house for a full day of banners & benches and whatever else we can find to do! Remember, the more we get done now, the less we have to do when it's really hot!

So this is it kids, the 2002 Renaissance Faire season is about to start. Let's get out there and have some FUN!



## And now a word from our Vice-President

Hi all-

I guess I should say greetings from the VP. I am pleased to accept the position of VP though I am still not quite sure of what I got suckered ...um.. what I volunteered to be. Actually I am quite excited to become more involved in the leadership of Matts and hope I will be good support for our illustrious presidente. I think that is it from me. I really can not think of anything else cute or politically witty to say. So Vive le St. Matthew's. Adieu.

Melinda

Greetings!

I have finished the Folsom Faire accounting. We did all right, with all things together and expenses taken out we still brought in around \$8,000.00. I say that's pretty good. GOOD JOB TO ALL!!!

As I understand it, Member Dues are running for one year from July 1, to June 30th of the following year. A few of you had paid your dues for 2002 and the rest of us owe our dues. If you are to be gate listed for Valhalla you need to pay your dues before then. So you can mail me your dues, or pass them on to Pam or Rebecca. My mailing address is the 7010 20th Street, Rio Linda, CA 95673. Or you can mail them to the guild post office box (P. O. Box 601362, Sacramento, 95860) and I will also get them.

The year for us will end June 30, 2002. If you have receipts, monies, or any thing that you need me to handle please get that to me by the end of June. I will close the books and have the accounting available for anyone who needs or requests to see it.

Thanks for allowing me to be your treasurer for so long. This year will make it my 10th anniversary as your treasurer. I have enjoyed doing the job and hope to continue for a lot longer.

Your treasurer  
Cathy Rowe

## We're growing!

By Wendy Nunes

Ahhhh, the joy of new faire season is upon us and with it the joy of new members. New members are a vital part of the success of the St. Matthews Guild because new members bring with them fresh blood.uhhhh, I mean fresh ideas, enthusiasm, and skills.

Those of us that were present at the last guild meeting had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of six prospective members, and a welcome addition we hope they may be.

Our new members bring some valued skills and experience with them including costuming with the Sacramento Costumers Guild, highly coveted culinary skills with particular experience in European renaissance style foods, education, construction and most important of all; they are charming, good looking, and will fit in beautifully.

I offer a warm welcome to our new and prospective members from the St. Matthews Guild. We look forward to an amazing new year of working you half to death.

## Parish th' Thot to Rehearse?

By Mimi Walker

I have received a request that we rehearse songs at faire. I think that's a great idea! I am requesting input from all those interested in singing. Please remember that we are simply reenacting a group of townfolk who sing for the fun of it, not any sort of professional group. Parish th' Thot singers don't have to sing well, just loud.

I'd like to have our first rehearsals at the Placerville May Faire, probably in the late afternoon when we're all sitting around after lunch, either Saturday or Sunday or even both days!

Do I hear any requests for what songs people would like to rehearse there? Any requests for songs nobody wants to sing ever again? Please email me or post to the group any and all suggestions.

If I don't hear anything, we'll practice all of them...mwahaha!



## For the Web Site..

from Lola

Hi All,

I'm updating the site as I get more information, but I am still waiting for information from the following -

Construction, Costume, Directors, Secretary, Treasurer, Education (and to find out if there is a new Education Coordinator), Newcastle Townfolk and Parish the Thot even if it's to say that last year's message still works. Please take a moment to review what's at the site and send me any changes and additions.

## Announcement

The long awaited new member handbook is expected to hit the shelves on April 20th. Reserve your copy now!

# Performance Notes

## Howdy from Sitcom

by Melinda Coy

Well, as a recap, let me tell you all about the fun and exciting time that is Sitcom. Sitcom is a sounding board for ideas on gigs for ALL us St Matts type folks to have fun with at faire. Currently we are accessing the achieve of memorable gigs in the back of our brains to bring you all stuff to do and keep busy with at faire. These gigs range from small fun gigs we can all do at the front gate to more elaborate gigs like the Shakespeare scene at Valhalla. We meet about once a month to plan and plot the take over of the world.. oh wait did I write that out loud... I meant plot how we can all work towards a better cohesiveness between our character and our faire environment in a Zen like state.. oh shoot... Mel being very strange again.. Sorry it's the cold medicine. Anyway. If my ramblings have not scared you away, and you have some ideas about what you would like to see us do at faire, gigs, etc, please come to a meeting. Anyway, here are a couple of gigs to wet your appetite.

\*\*

### “The Will Wood Gawk”

Props: None

Cast: One person, any status or gender

Gig: This is more easily demonstrated than described in words, but basically this involves you thinking like a person from the 15th century dropped into modern times. You are awed and confused beyond belief at these strange folk. You've never seen anything like this before. Crouch down, walk around the person with your jaw dropped open, reach out as if to touch them to see if they're real, and snatch your hand quickly back in fear, before touching them. Stare at them as they leave. Most patrons laugh at this.

\*\*

### “Lost Rock”

Props: Any rock or piece of grass or anything from the ground: preferably not trash

Cast: One person, any status or gender

Gig: Pick up a rock (or blade of grass or whatever) and approach a patron with, “My good Lord (or Lady), you have dropped your fine rock (or blade of grass or whatever) and I return it to you thus.” If they won't take it try someone else, don't push it. If they take it, follow them from a distance and when they drop it, pick it up and repeat, possibly several times.

\*\*

## For Plague Rats...from Lola

We are meeting first and third Thursday of the month at 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm at Lola's house. No experience necessary and since we've just started up, now is a great time to join.

\*\*

The following is an update on the Plague Rats dance group written by Gregor, Master of the Tavern, also known as, Gregor the Lecher. (a man given to lechery)

Meeting at Lola's house on the first and third Thursday of each month at 7PM. After a few meeting it has become apparent that there is more “fun” to be had at these practice sessions than anyone would have believed. Everyone must bear in mind that, for example, Liz has never danced before and she is taking to these old English steps like a small duck to water. Then there is me, mostly loud and laughing at the way I attempt to put my ‘best’ foot forward. Usually we walk through the steps several times before the music is turned on. Once the music starts it is like watching a three stooges film. By the time we “walk” through it, giggles and finger pointing takes up the next few minutes before Lola can gain the upper hand to show us where we might have differed from the standard steps. Me thinks that at Faire this season, the group will be able to make a pretty fair showing of ourselves. At least we will be having fun trying. An me also thinks, isn't that why we are dressing up like whatever we dress-up as, to have fun. I encourage one and all to attend Plague Rats practice sessions. You never know, yee might jest have some fun. ....

\*\*

### “Tell Me a Story”

Props: None

Cast: One to many

Gig: Go to a patron sitting at a hay bale or at a table. sit at there feet and ask them to tell you a story for where they come form. Ask many questions.

Comments regarding  
Our Own Dear Queen  
taken from within a review of  
Folsom Fair in the January  
2002 issue of *Improvisations*  
by Kevin Gibbons and Melissa Tosetti

Once again Deborah Doyle took center stage as Queen Elizabeth. Last year, with everybody more concerned with preserving their encampment, wares and skins, we did not have much of an opportunity to see Deborah in her debut performance. We had ample chance to correct that lack during this fair. The queen was enthusiastic, loud and captured the essence of the lusty queen of Renaissance England. She carries herself with a bit of a swagger, often standing with one hand on her hip, a tilt to her head and a knowing smile upon her lips, especially during some of Randall's more bawdy songs. She brings to mind a vibrant, energetic woman who counts among her companions adventurers such as Francis Drake and Walter Raleigh. Folsom Fair will do well with Ms. Doyle in the spotlight!

## The Golden Tea Party

by Nathan Schmidt

On March 10, Liz and I participated in the Golden Tea Party at the Hyatt. This event is an annual fund-raiser for the Discovery Museum in Old Sacramento and is a combination tea party and historical fashion show. Liz and I led off the fashion show, which focused on hat fashions and was emceed by Kitty O'Neil, in our Henry VIII period costumes. We were followed by Jason and Stella in Elizabethan garb, and a cavalcade of others tracing fashion up to the present day. Most of the participants in the fashion show were members of historical re-enactment and costuming groups. In addition to the fashion show, there was a delightful tea featuring delicious little tea cakes and sandwiches. Each table was decorated with a hat which later became a raffle prize. There was also a silent auction of several tables of teapots which ranged from the whimsical to the truly beautiful. On the whole, this was a delightful event which we hope to participate in again next year, perhaps with a larger contingent from St. Matt's.

## What you missed

at the March 16, 2002

Guild Meeting held at Liz and Nathan's

By Ken Thompson

After the meeting proper, Melinda Coy held a workshop in Character Development. In other words, putting aside our normal characters (of which few are fit for public consumption) and developing characters geared toward the Renaissance.

First we went around the room introducing ourselves: Real Name, Fair Name (or most commonly used, if there are more than one) (Mimi ;-), and one characteristic about our Fair Personality.

The names were both new and familiar, as were the participants. The characteristics tended to be about what you'd expect, with "Lecherous" being prominent for the men, and "bossy" for the women. It was not always men naming themselves lech, nor the women themselves bossy, but I digress....

After we'd gone around the room, we were given this situation: We were at a political fund raiser, with the intent of introducing ourselves to at least five people. We were to be in character in as much as who we were, but not speaking in fair accent. This was at least partially in deference to the newcomers, of which there were several. NOT using BFA, however, proved harder for some than speaking normally (Mimi ;-). But the idea was to intermingle and "meet" everyone's character and exercise the characteristic mentioned above.

It was actually quite entertaining, as suddenly everyone there seemed to be running for something or a bar wench. Pretty normal for a fair crowd, really. Then Nathan and Liz unceremoniously tossed us out due to some other appointment they had, at the laundromat or something. But fear not, Melinda has more in store for us at the Big Workshop Weekend (TM)!

## Opportunity to Share Your Passion for the Renaissance

or

## A Cry for Help

By Patti Sheetz

My daughter Jillian and I are very excited to be new members of St. Matthew's Guild! We were enthralled and delighted when we attended our first fair a couple of summers ago. Jillian is a member of 4-H so I started a 4-H Renaissance Project. Our urban 4-H group is learning about the Renaissance and attending fairs. We met Liz at a CIRGA workshop and her enthusiasm and willingness to help with the project thrilled us. In hopes that her passion is rampant amongst guild members I would like to ask for your assistance.

The Country Centre 4-H project needs knowledgeable persons to share their expertise with a group of bright and enthusiastic members. If you would be interested in sharing a couple of hours sometime after faire season please contact me at <jpsheetz@prodigy.net> Some of the areas we would welcome assistance in are:

Ironworking	Costuming
Making Ink	Country Dancing
Calligraphy	Cooking
Soap making	Astronomy
Games	Music
Dancing	Leather craft-
Archery	Blackwork
Fencing	Group Skits

Hope to hear from soem of you!

**Chris Morgan from the  
Knights of St. John will be  
speaking on coins and money  
at our workshop. He will  
have available for sale repro-  
ductions of coins from the  
time of both Henry VIII and  
Elizabeth I. These are mar-  
velous reproductions and a  
must for every pouch!**

## A Little Humor with your History

1. Ancient Egypt was inhabited by mummies and they all wrote in hydraulics. They lived in the Sarah Dessert. The climate of the Sarah is such that all the inhabitants have to live elsewhere.

2. Moses led the Hebrew slaves to the Red Sea where they made unleavened bread, which is bread made without any ingredients. Moses went up on Mount Cyanide to get the ten commandments. He died before he ever reached Canada.

3. Solomon had three hundred wives and seven hundred porcupines.

4. The Greeks were a highly sculptured people, and without them we wouldn't have history. The Greeks also had myths. A myth is a female moth.

5. Socrates was a famous Greek teacher who went around giving people advice. They killed him. Socrates died from an overdose of wedlock. After his death, his career suffered a dramatic decline.

6. In the Olympic games, Greeks ran races, jumped, hurled biscuits, and threw the java.

7. Julius Caesar extinguished himself on the battlefields of Gaul. The Ides of March murdered him because they thought he was going to be made king. Dying, he gasped out: "Tee Hee, Brutus."

8. Joan of Arc was burnt to a steak and was canonized by Bernard Shaw.

9. It was an age of great inventions and discoveries. Gutenberg invented removable type and the Bible. Another important invention was the circulation of blood. Sir Walter Raleigh is a historical figure because he invented cigarettes and started smoking.

10. The greatest writer of the Renaissance was William Shakespeare. He was born in the year 1564, supposedly on his birthday. He never made much money and is famous only because of his plays. He wrote tragedies, comedies, and hysterectomies, all in Islamic pentameter. Romeo and Juliet are an example of a heroic couple. Romeo's last wish was to be laid by Juliet.

12. Writing at the same time as Shakespeare was Miguel Cervantes. He wrote Donkey Hote. The next great author was John Milton. Milton wrote Paradise Lost. Then his wife died and he wrote Paradise Regained.

Look what we have for YOU  
at the 1st Annual Weekend Workshop

Saturday

9:30 Check in - The Club at Natomas Park  
10:00 10:15 Opening session (overview) Liz  
10:15 -12:00 Giggling in Character - (Melinda Coy)  
Noon -1 pm Lunch/ St Matt's Annual meeting  
1 pm -1:45 Religion and the Puritans (Kevin Kaos)  
1:45 -2:30 Oh my Gawd, it's the Queen! (Deborah Doyle)  
2:30 - 4:00 English country Dance (Lola Pundinski)  
Adjourn to Liz & Nathan's house  
4:15 - 4:45 Money & coinage (Chris Morgan)  
4:45 - 6:00 Dice & card games (Nathan Schmidt)  
6:00 pm - 11:00 pm  
Dinner, frivolity and videos

Sunday

10:00 - 12:00 Archery lessons (Discovery Park)  
Michael Bocchicchio, Jeffery Cicolani,  
Ken Thompson & Nathan Schmidt  
12:00 -1:00 Lunch - The Club at Naomas Park  
1:00 - 2:30 Court Dance (Jennifer Hastings)  
2:30 - 3:30 Renn speake (Wayne Anderson)  
3:30 - 4:00 Summary and closing

Directions to the Club -

Take Natomas Blvd to Club Center Dr. Turn left on Club Center. Turn right into the parking lot. Go thru the main doors and turn to your left.

## Our Presenters

**Chris Morgan's** involvement in Renaissance faire has been relatively short by some standards, a mere 15 years. His interest in history predates His involvement in faire by at least 25 years. While his formal education would hardly qualify him as an authority on anything historical, his desire to understand why things are they way they are and how they got that way has directed his efforts on researching a long list of disconnected subjects: Sexual Mores of the 17th Century and The Effects on 20th Century Sexuality in America; When, How and Why Illicit Drugs Became Illicit; Who Smoked What and When; If The Arcata & Mad River Railroad Had Been Standard Gauge and More Money Where Would It Have Gone; Why Is Yarmouth Keep The Only Example of Henrican Defense Using Cannon; Why Elizabeth Would Grant An Audience With A Banned Religious Order.

**Wayne Anderson** has been interested in history and languages all his life. About sixteen years ago he first went to the Renaissance Faire in Novato, and about ten years ago he started working it. He has worked faires as a printer's apprentice, a blacksmith's apprentice, a member of St. Cuthbert's guild, and has run street games. In addition, he has performed Shakespeare on stage at Cal State Hayward.

He is married to Margo Anderson, creator of Margo Anderson's Historic Costume Patterns, and works as proofreader and copy editor for the pattern manuals. In return, he gets really keen costumes.

At this writing he is in the final throes of completing, "The Bard's English," a book on Elizabethan English specifically designed with Renaissance

Faire performers in mind.

## Our Presenters (con't)

**Deborah Doyle** is a San Francisco writer/researcher/producer with a lifelong interest in theater. Deborah currently serves as Board Chair of the Friends & Foundation of the SF Public Library and is also an officer of Presenters of the Past, a non-profit that helps bring history to life in classrooms and historic sites throughout California.

Deborah worked at the Northern Renaissance Pleasure Faire for many years as an actor and director. She is currently the Guildmaster of St. Patrick's Irish Guild. Several years ago, she rediscovered the joys of ensemble singing with the Ladies Oratorical and Recreational Society-an all female group that performs songs from the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, blending historical fact with theatrical fun and merriment-appearing most recently at the Dickens Christmas Fair in San Francisco and the Corinthian Yacht Club in Tiburon. As Elizabeth I at the Folsom Renaissance Faire in 2000 and 2001, Deborah has found that it's good to be the Queen and looks forward to reprising the role in 2002.

**Michael Bocchicchio** started his archery hobby as a teenager; he has been shooting with a traditional bow for the past three years. More recently, he has been learning to fletch his own arrows, much to the joy of his infant daughter who enjoys trying to eat the little leftover bits of feather that end up all over the kitchen floor.

Sunday's archery workshop will begin with a brief introduction to the history and use of the English longbow. Everyone will then get a chance to shoot a more-or-less traditional bow; bows will be available in a variety of weights and for both left- and right-handers.

**Lola Pudinski** "My involvement in dance started in the dim past when I started taking Scottish Country Dance lessons through the Learning Exchange. Soon after that I started English Country Dancing and Scottish Highland Dancing. I have been Scottish Country, Scottish Highland and English Country for over ten years. I have been involved in Faire since 1988. I have been involved with The Plague Rat Dancers from it's beginning in 1989, either as a member, an assistant or as the instructor. I, along with the Plague Rat Dancers, have preformed at Faires and various function, I also have overseen and danced in various performances of Kyla's School of Highland Dance.

### Up-Coming Events

April 20-21 Weekend Workshop

April 20 Annual Meeting

May 4 CIRGA workshop (Location TBA)

May 11 Guild Meeting & Work Day

9am-6 pm

May 18 & 19 Placerville Mayfaire

June 1 & 2, 8 & 9 Valhalla Renaissance Faire

June 23 & 24 Fair Oaks Tudor Faire

July 6 & 7 Discovery Park Faire

Don't Miss the Weekend Workshop and Annual  
Guild Meeting at  
The Club at Natomas Park  
Corner of Natomas & Club Center Dr.  
on Saturday, April 20th, 2002!  
Weekend workshop 9:30 AM  
**Guild Meeting 12 NOON**

**St. Matthew's Guild  
of Historical Actors**  
P.O. Box 601362  
Sacramento, CA 95860

