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# The Newcastle Courant

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St. Matthew's Guild of Historical Actors

October 2000

## Special FOLSOM FAIRE Edition

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### OFFICERS

#### **Directors:**

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

#### **President:**

Peter Covington 689-6229

#### **Vice-President:**

Mimi Walker 393-0804

#### **Treasurer:**

Cathy Rowe

#### **Secretary:**

Kathy Stefun 483-2642

### COMMITTEE HEADS

#### **New Members:**

Rhonda Rumrey 447-3423

#### **Education:**

Rhonda Rumrey 447-3423

#### **Costume:**

Rebecca Bocchicchio 624-7790

#### **Construction:**

Liz Martin 419-1395

#### **Plague Rat Dancers:**

Lola Pudinski 836-0837

#### **SITCOM:**

Peter Covington 689-6229

#### **Scots:**

Lola Pudinski 836-0837

#### **Newsletter:**

Nathan Schmidt / Liz Martin  
5160 Gorham Way  
Sacramento, CA 95835  
E-mail:  
nschmidt@ispchannel.com  
Elsbeth@ispchannel.com

#### **WebMistress**

Lola Pudinski  
pandora@softcom.net

#### **E-mail administrator:**

Nathan Schmidt  
admin@stmatthewsguild.org

## Pep Talk From The Faire Director

Has anyone else noticed the recent development of a slight chill and tang in the early morning air? That combination always turns my thoughts towards our faire and I start feeling the excitement of producing a harvest Renaissance faire. Like the farmers of that time, what we produce takes a lot of hard work, but there is a great amount of joy in the results of our tremendous labors.

We will start with load up on Sunday afternoon at the Rowes' at about 2:00 p.m. We begin arriving with our sets at 8:00 a.m. Wednesday morning with the delivery of the fence, which Steve will supervise and Liz or her designee will begin cracking the whip...er...I mean encouraging and organizing us in our setting up endeavours. Peter/Mindy, Nathan and Shawn (or their designees) will map out faire site. We will break for lunch, provided by the guild and the efforts of Sandy Cook (Wow! isn't that an appropriate choice for our head chef!) and her assistants the wild Wilson women! and then we all return to set up until dark and supper (again provided by the guild chef). If you want to help with cooking/clean up, talk to Sandy Cook. Thursday we return at 8:00 a.m. and continue with set up. The hay bales and prisoners should be there then. Last year we were finished set up of the large things by mid day. Set up continues with finishing touches the rest of Thursday until dark and through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to dark. Friday morning also includes vendor check

in. Talk to Peter or Mindy if you want to help them with this. We will also need traffic controllers as the day moves on Friday. Saturday and Sunday, Melinda and Alice (and I need one other experienced St. Matt's member to volunteer) will be down at the actors gate checking wristbands. For everyone else, notes begins the day at 9:00 a.m. on the main stage (in the horseshoe pit in the far northeast corner of the park). During the rest of the day, we will need people to take tickets/check wristbands/watch the front gate in shifts from 9:45 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Saturday and 9:45 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Sunday. We will also need people to be in the encampment to watch over things and provide activity interest. And we will need volunteers to give Pam and Cathy a couple of hours of break from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. both days. Please let me know what times you are available to help with these things. Sunday night we do as much tear down as we can. Monday we finish packing up and take everything back to storage and put it away at the Rowes'. Then we all go out for lunch or dinner.

As you can tell, we will all be very busy at our faire. It doesn't leave much time for playing or shopping, but when you hear how much we're loved by folks, it all becomes worth the effort. And we will party Saturday night in our encampment (unless everyone wants to be a mystery man at St. Max's).

~Mimi

## What You Missed At The September Guild Meeting

### ST. MATTHEW'S GUILD

Minutes of September 16, 2000 meeting

Meeting was called to order by Peter Covington, President, at 12:30 p.m.

The minutes from the previous meeting were approved.

Peter reported the good news that St. Matt's t-shirts are ready to order. After some discussion, the decision was that they will be gray with burgundy print. The guild will purchase 10 extra for future members.

Mindy stated that she received a call requesting that the guild "do" a wedding next July. This would perhaps include teaching dances, providing "jesters" or being "decorative". More information is needed to reach a decision. Rhonda will follow up.

### Committee reports:

**Costume Committee:** Everyone is reminded that new costumes need to be approved by the Committee.

**Construction Committee:** Yay! gluing and painting the ticket booth is nearly done. After lunch work will continue. Liz is checking into rental trucks to transport stuff to and from Faire. The pavilion-raising went well - it looks great! It's also time for Faire sign ups. Lists to sign up for work times for faire and meals were sent around. Load up for Faire will be on the Tuesday evening before Faire at Rowe's (6:00) We will need generators and work lights. Sandy Cook has one of each.

**Education Committee:** Rhonda and Dan are going to Folsom to meet with some Girl Scouts this afternoon.

**Folsom Faire Committee:** A meeting of the Faire Committee is scheduled for Sept. 26.

**Plague Rats:** Dancers are meeting almost every Wednesday at Lola's - still want to see more people.

**Sit Com:** will meet to discuss Faire "gig" on Thurs. Sept. 21 at Covington's.

The members planning to attend the Hanford Faire will get together to discuss transportation, etc.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30. Respectfully submitted at the last minute as usual, Kathy Stefun

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### Upcoming Events

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**Every Wednesday** Plague Rats DanceParty at Lola's - 6:30 p.m.

**Oct. 21** Guild Meeting/Baked Potato Bar Potluck at Liz & Nathan's - Noon.

**Oct. 22** Folsom Load Up

**Oct. 25-27** Folsom Set Up

**Oct. 28 & 29** Folsom Renaissance Faire and Tournament

**Oct. 30** Folsom Tear Down

**Nov. 18** Guild Meeting - Location TBA



# Advice and Counsel from Liz the Construction Goddess

Hey there, boys & girls! It's show time! I can hardly believe that Faire is almost here. We do have a minor change to the schedule. We will be doing load up on Sunday, October 22nd at 1 pm out at the Rowe's, **NOT** Tuesday evening. Steve is letting us use his truck and trailer, so we get to load up early. I'm very excited about the prospect of loading up in the daylight. We've got a lot to transport out to the fair site, and every hand will be appreciated. So bring your friends! Some of you have been wondering what exciting task you will get to learn and perfect during set-up. They will include burlap hanging (using the ever popular hog ringer), pavilion raising, stage floor laying, and the all important privy concealment. We will also attempt to put up the shade cover over the main stage, and to do some touch up painting on the wine garden and tavern. As usual, we will have the prisoners on Thursday. They will set up the towers, position the hay bales under the watchful eye of Miss Stella, and assist with what ever else needs to be done. Following tradition, St. Matt's will feed the working

class. Sandy Cook is our beloved chef this year, and what a menu she has planned for us! If you have not already signed up for the meal plan, please contact her immediately (Ladyflud@pacbell.net).

Some suggestions on surviving your first faire set-up:

1. Do not annoy the faire director. (Mimi-Ask her what she accepts!)
2. Do not annoy the construction manager. (Liz-Chocolate, mochas & Coke are always gratefully accepted.)
3. Do not taunt happy fun ball.
4. Try to get enough sleep.
5. Take your vitamins.
6. If you cannot make it during the time you said you would, please call. We get worried. And then cranky. See #1 or 2. (397-5455 or 397-5454)
7. Don't forget to set your clock back on Saturday night. You'll need the extra hour of sleep.
8. Have a great time and remember: It's all about us!

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## A Review of Northern Faire

Last Sunday, Nathan, R.S., Sharon, and I (Liz) attended The Renaissance Pleasure Faire (aka: Northern, the Nut Faire, or the evil corporate monster!) This was the first time I had been to the new site and I have to admit I liked it. I believe that the site is actually smaller but the layout of the faire was nice, and the traffic flowed well. The roads were wide and not too crowded. It felt comfortable, once I got over trying find things where they "used" to be! It is nice to be at a site that is set up for longer than 2 days. I really liked the different colored burlap! One of the biggest complaints I have heard about Northern is that they have been trying to push the guilds out. I will say that while I did notice there were not as

many encampments, I found the actors seemed to be more willing to engage and interact with the patrons than they have been in the past years at Blackpoint. The washer-women were out and about as were the Queen's Guard and the Puritan's. It felt very weird not to have anything to do! What am I supposed to do as a "patron"? We went to a couple of stage shows-My favorite was Broom. He is a fire eater /bowling ball juggler / comic /cute guy! And we ate. The Bucket of Ducats from the Beansteak is the best value at only \$2.50! All in all we had a good day. I'd never suggest paying full price, but for \$10 we got our money's worth.

## **Life in Elizabethan England: A Compendium of Common Knowledge, 1558-1603 - PART 4**

### **Spending**

In practice, people seldom speak of ordinary amounts of money in terms of pounds, unless it was in thousands, like the annual value of an estate, or a special “voluntary” tax.

You probably think of ordinary, daily expenses in terms of shillings and pence. (“I lost 7 crowns last night at tables.”) Money bought more in those days. Do not just substitute pounds for dollars. Try using shillings, or even pennies, depending on the item.

Twenty pounds for a pair of gloves is highway robbery. But 20 shillings for a pair of gloves doesn't sound so bad, at least theatrically speaking. (Actually 7 shillings is closer to the truth.)

For smaller items, like food and drink, use pennies. A penny or two for a beer is about right, where 2 pounds or even 2 shillings is unthinkable.

Tip a household-type servant no more than a few pence. Remember, he only makes £2-5 per year! (Note: that tip is called a vail.) A common vail is about 3/4d.

If you're buying information or a favor from anybody besides a servant use gifts instead of money. For servants—use money!



### **Greasing the Wheels**

The sending and receiving of gifts (never money!) in exchange for recent or future favors is common practice all through courtly society. This is not considered corrupt. It's just the way things work. In fact, the system couldn't run without it.

There is no undue delicacy about defining what would be an acceptable gift, even to naming “a pretty dog” or a specific kind of hawk.

Quails are a prime delicacy, and can be used to sweeten a request, attract attention, or turn away wrath. (In the '40s, Lord Lisle bought them in large lots to give away a dozen at a time.)

You can send a gift just to let someone important know you're here, even without having a specific request or favor in mind. They'll owe you.

You may pass on a request from someone else:

For example: “My friend, if you will send my lord of Leicester that hound of yours that he admired, he'll know it came from you and that I suggested it. He and I will both be in your debt, and he will be in mine.” Get it?

Most frequent *douceur* (sweetener) type gifts include:

*Game (often quail or deer):* Includes all game birds, such as herons, plovers, cranes, egrets, as well as cooked venison, boar's head, sturgeon, wild swine, salmon. May be cooked or caged, as appropriate.

*Wine:* The best wines are clarets from Gascony, though tastes differ.

*Hawks:* All kinds of hawks are good. So are caged song birds, such as linnets.

*Hunting dogs:* Mastiffs, Talbot hounds, bloodhounds, coursing hounds, and so on.

*Rare or special books:* Manuscripts in Greek and Latin, translations from Arabic and Hebrew, certain devotional texts.

*Also home made things* like marmalade, beer, and honey.

This is the one in a series of excerpts from *Life in Elizabethan England: A Compendium of Common Knowledge, 1558-1603, Elizabethan Commonplaces For Writers, Actors, and Re-enactors*, written and edited by Maggie Secara. On the web at: [www.renaissance.dm.net/compendium/](http://www.renaissance.dm.net/compendium/)

## Reviews of the Hanford Tudor Faire

For any of you who didn't make it, the St. Matt's contingent had a great time at the Hanford Faire on September 30 and October 1st. The drive was a bit longer than for most of the faires we go to (it took Liz and I about three hours and 15 minutes) but I think we all agreed that it was worth it. The following are a few reviews of the faire by St. Matt's folk that I pulled off of our eGroups mailing list.

It was low key but nice, really—a bit on the hot/muggy side. The town is still cute. The murder mystery thing was okay but a little bit of a bust as bad acoustics made it impossible to hear most of what was going on in the final bit where the murderer was revealed. Liz and I were in the second row and couldn't follow a lot of it. The pavilion went up well (so Liz, Nathan, and Linda said) and came down in a jif—at 5:45 all cars were packed and we hit the road. In all, a pleasant weekend and we missed all of you who couldn't come!

One small baddish thing—a renegade palm tree sapped on one corner of the pavilion roof. We're not quite sure how to clean it.

*Rebecca*

To all who missed it: Hanford was so much fun! Even though our group was small, we all had a great time. The trial run of the pavilion went fine. We looked awesome!

There was lots of fun things going on. A possible new member, Zach, tagged along with me, my mom, and Nathan. He was skeptical, but had a wonderful time. He, my mom and I got to dance

alot with the Merry Pryanksters. They were great. They even pulled us up on stage to dance Roughty Tufty, and the psyche dance(hearts ease). That was really embarrassing because I was afraid I would mess them up. Thank you Lola for the dance lessons! They said we could dance with them at Folsom. They taught us a few fun dances and we finally got to see Saturday Night/Sunday Morning and the Whirl and Hurl dance. It looks nauseating! LOLA, lets learn Whirley Gigs. It takes six people. Well, I guess that is my review. Lots of fun, and we missed everyone who didn't make it. My only regret is the water! ICK!

See ya all later!

*Yvonne*

I concur with the other reviews. One of the best things was the killer ice cream parlour across the street. Don't even think about ordering 2 scoops! It was fab! Nathan & I really enjoyed ourselves. It was laid back and very casual. And they had 2 sets of real bathrooms. Always a plus in my book! I hope we can have more people go next year.

*Liz*

Don't Miss the Next Guild Meeting  
and Potato Bar Potluck  
at Liz & Nathan's  
5160 Gorham Way  
Sacramento, CA  
at Noon  
on Saturday, October 21, 2000!

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

