

The Fencers, Dancers, and Bearbaiters Quarterly

The Newsletter of the Traynd Bandes in North America

Vol. VI, no. 1.

'Ever But in Times of Need At Hand'

July 1998

Greetings from the Trayn'd Bandes of London, a federation of living history groups for the period 1585-1645, distinguished by their pursuit of both civilian and military activities, cultivation of first-person interpretation, and fanatical devotion to historically accurate mayhem.

The constituent groups are Gardener's Company (centered in Virginia-Maryland), the Tabard Inn Society (centered in Ontario-Michigan), and the Westminster Trayn'd Bandes (centered in Texas).

The FDBBQ is published quarterly in hardcopy and electronic formats, each issue by one of the TBL's constituent groups:

1 January	TBL
1 April	WTB
1 July	TIS
1 October	Gardiners

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If you have access to the World Wide Web,

don't miss our splendid site at:

<http://www-personal.umich.edu/~jsingman/bandes.html>

Note: The TBL website will be moving soon, perhaps as early as September 1. If you have trouble locating it, try contacting one of the local TBL groups for further information.

Upcoming Events

[Major' Events are the most important in the calendar, and everyone is strongly encouraged to try to make it to as many of these as they reasonably can. 'Regional' Events are smaller events which people are encouraged to attend if they are close enough to make it over a normal weekend (say, a 5-hour drive or less). 'Local' Events are very small events which people are encouraged to attend only if the journey would take less than an hour.]

August 1998: New Castle PA. Eighth annual Trained Bands Elizabethan encampment at the Pennsic Wars. This year looks to be the best year yet with more drilling, more singing, more carousing -- you get the picture. Major. Contact Jeff Morgan.

October 1998: Ethel, Ontario. Shapwick Michaelmas Fair and Muster. A harvest festival in the Oxfordshire village of Shapwick during the English Civil War. Major. Contact TIS.

December 1998: Fredericksburg MD. Gardiner's Christmas Feast. Regional. Contact: Gardiner's.

March 1999: University of Toronto, Ontario. Annual Tabard Inn spring (?) event. Afternoon workshops, and an Elizabethan evening at the Inn afterwards, with light foods, fake ale and dancing. Regional. Contact TIS.

March 1999: ?Buecher State Park, Smithville TX. ?Spring Muster of the Westminster Trayn'd Bandes. Major. Contact: WTB.

April to Mid-May 1999: Martinsville VA. The Raid on Mousehole. One of the TBL's largest annual events, Elizabethan setting, Major. Contact Gardiner's.

May 1999: Ethel, Ontario. Shapwick Whitsun Muster and Ale. An authentic (and therefore inevitably raucous) festival in the remote Oxfordshire village of

Shapwick during the English Civil War. Major. Contact TIS.

Spring Muster of the Westminster Trayn'd Bands

Jeffrey L. Singman

No longer let it be said that the WTB are the kid brother of the Trayn'd Bades family! A certain unnamed Badesman went for a visit to Austin for the muster this past March, and cannot begin to do justice to what a fine event they put on.<p>



<p><i>The Bands of Westminster strut their stuff.</i></p>

Attendance was quite good, with about 30 people or so present, good fellows all with diverse talents and an admirably high standard of kit. Also attending was a red-tailed hawk, who thought the red-coated bandsmen looked rather tasty. The military crew scared off the Spaniard yet again with their crisp martial display--featuring no less than two drummers and a flute, and a respectable pike block about a dozen strong. The exercise-game of dividing the troops up and having them attempt to manoeuvre into a position to flank one another worked quite well, and would be very worth developing for all the TBL groups.<p>



<p><i>A lesson in grace.</i></p>

Civilian activities were no less prominent. The occasion was graced by a particularly large and talented musical consort who provided hours of sweet instrumental sounds, and there was dancing in the afternoon and singing in the evening. Since the muster took place in March, there was also a colourful battle-royal between Lent and Summer--the cabbages did fly. Provision had even been made for cockthrowing, but there were so many fun things to do that there was just not enough time for it. Most notable of all was a highly successful spirit of persona-play, helped, I think, by a credible and vigorous scenario, strong character types, diverse civilian activities, and the general sociability of the Austin crowd. It's well worth the visit to Texas...<p>



◇Lent gets what's coming to him.◇<p>

Seventh Annual Shapwick Whitsun Ale

Shapwick held its annual Whitsun event this May in our glorious new ALEHOUSE, aka. Shapwick Cathedral. The place is huge and excellently well appointed--we encourage people to come up for a visit one of these times. This building was constructed with relatively few man-hours under rather difficult logistical circumstances (we being a small group of whom almost no-one lives within 2 hours of Shapwick), so it offers a good idea what others might do if they want to get buildings up on a site in short order.<p>

The Whitsun itself was raucous, with a particularly colourful and vigorous Oss (a local tradition--if you haven't seen it, drop by next Whitsun morning) and a visit from the Shapwick Worm. Particularly noteworthy was the Manor Court, attended by the villagers, at which we complained enthusiastically about our neighbours. At last the mystery of the broken stiles has been unravelled!<p>

Spring Muster of Gardiner's Company, April 4 1998

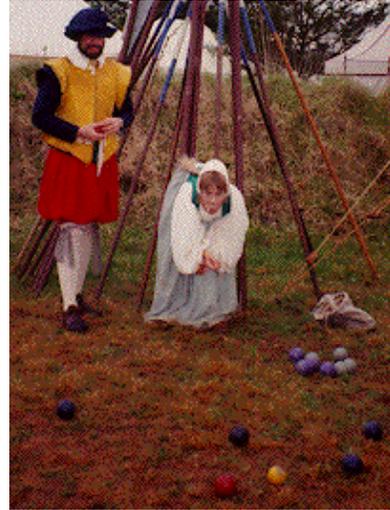
Diane Glewwe

Not even the wet weather could dampen the spirits at Mousehole this past April, 1998. The cook fires kept on throughout the day while the men turned out to muster.<p>



◇The county armours display their mastery of the military art to an awestruck sergeant.◇<p>

Mistress Grace Gamble set to dyeing all day. Folks helped Tom Hamilton in the kitchen in preparation for a hearty feast and fresh bread baked in the coals. The weather did clear up enough for entertainment in the late afternoon with bowls, shuttlecock and a few rounds of bear baiting.<p>



◇Cade is fleeced of his hard-earned farthings by a promising young bowls shark.◇<p>

The report from my good husband said the muster went extremely well. It seemed so by the way everyone ate in the evening!

[Ed.: Happily, the group had sufficient large tentage to minimize the effect of the rain, and the site is sufficiently well drained that the grounds never became unpleasant to tread. The mustering of the company for military drill was a particularly splendid sight, with one of the largest pike blocks I have ever seen, not to mention a significant contingent of shot and county armours. The hearts of the company were also cheered by a particularly tasty meal, with a fine stew, fresh baked bread, and wafers.<p>

The site itself is extremely promising--there are already fortifications, the place is extremely scenic, and the owner seems not a bad fellow to deal with. Gardiner's is currently planning site development prior to the next muster, and if all the various groups that use the site were to contribute to its improvement (the area is rural, and probably would afford plenty of dilapidated barns for cheap building construction), we might see a very handsome Avalon within the next few years. If anyone can make it happen, Gardiner's certainly can...<p>

Gardener's Company Work Weekend - June 27-28

Diane Glewwe

Master Geoffrey Gamble and his wife Grace hosted a band of members of the company at their home. Much was

accomplished. There were people in the basement sawing or hammering as the sewing machines were competing with the noise upstairs. Company T-shirts were distributed to those who made purchase. The shirts are period blue featuring an illustration based on the Lant Roll with company name on the front and the company motto on the back. A home-made supper was had by all in the evening followed by a planning meeting to discuss upcoming activities and plan for the camp at Pennsic.

The rough part of the work weekend was yet to come. Sunday morning everyone met at the James River to muster for the Second Annual Reenactment of the Spanish Armada. This year folks were well armed. We suffered no casualties (the Oreos made it this year). Nevertheless, we were ever but at times of need!

Tabard Inn Society at Empire Day

Victoria Hadfield

On July 4th, nine members of the Tabard Inn Society traveled to Stoney Creek, Ontario to participate in "Empire Day". This event was billed as "a day to represent anything that's British", and as promised, they had British cars, motorcycles, military bands, Morris dancers, English and Irish folk acts, and much more, including us! The organisers had very accommodatingly set aside a large space for us and provided several picnic tables.

We had decided to do as much first-person interpretation as we could comfortably manage, and Victoria Hadfield put together a short guide to first-person interpretation for the complete novice. Nancy Crozier-Stoyles handled the practical planning arrangements and coordinated with the event's organisers. We decided to portray several booths at a fair, so we set up one table as a market booth, with baskets full of produce; a large tent and a second table made an outdoor alehouse. This gave us plenty of opportunities to interact with passing visitors; trying to persuade them to buy some fresh lettuce or parsnips or inviting them to join us at the alehouse for a game of cards. We also had a peddler's pack full of items 'for sale' (but only for real pennies and ha'pennies), which provided a wonderful opportunity for show-and-tell.

At various points during the day the Trayn'd Bands mustered for drill, their ranks swelled by potential new members recruited by the ever-enthusiastic Andrew Bentley (Dave Stoyles). Dave had purchased some 6' long dowels to be used as half-pikes, thus allowing even the youngest recruits to participate. Sergeant-for-the-day Geoffrey Cade (Jeffrey Singman) demonstrated how to flourish the ensign, then marched off Bentley, William Smithson (David Gunnar Wentz), Sandy Mulford (Stephen Budge) and Charles Clark (Cary Timar), along with our new recruits, for a parade around the fair grounds. Stephen brought his musket to do firing demonstrations; unfortunately the omnipresent light rain prevented this, although he did show it off to a few interested visitors.

After drill we continued to hawk our vegetables and enjoy the alehouse's hospitality. When the rain got heavier, we took shelter inside the tent to eat our dinner: cheese, bread and fruit, and some pies which were provided by the event organisers and kindly fetched by Agnes Smithson (Maaja Wentz). Eventually Jeffrey, Dave and Gunnar ventured forth despite the weather and actually had about a dozen people happily drilling in the pouring rain! Jeffrey

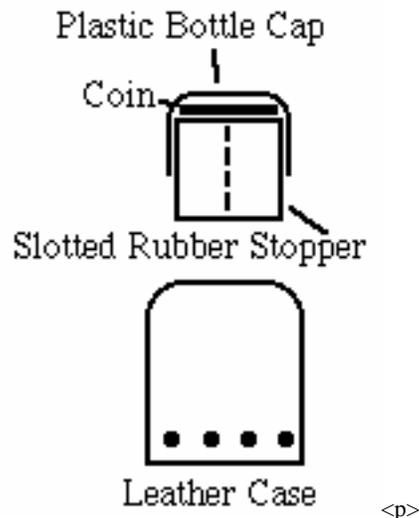
and Dave let a number of young boys try on their armour, and Jeffrey even taught some fencing. Those of us who remained in the shelter of the alehouse were entertained by Honour Greene (Paula Grosso) playing music on a tin whistle.

The event was definitely a success and everyone enjoyed themselves, despite the weather, which kept the number of visitors rather low. We received several compliments on the way we looked, and our general presentation, and we're looking forward to our next demo, a "Military Through the Ages" event held at the Fort Malden museum in Amherstburg, Ontario, on August 1st.

Fence-o-Rama

Jeffrey L. Singman

The cunning folk of Gardiner's have recently come up with a nice improvement on the design of button I have been using for the swords. I highly commend it for others to use (although with some care, since it lacks the eyesocket safety factor of the older, larger design:



The leather case is cut in two halves, sewn together around the edges, with perforations at the bottom to take a lace that holds it closed around the button.

I have also lately come across the first description I have seen of the actual construction of Elizabethan fencing buttons, in Joseph Swetnam, *The Schoole the Noble and Worthy Science of Defence* (1617), 184-85:

Button both thy foiles and thy staves before the practise with them, for otherwise the unskilfull may thrust out one anothers eyes, yea although there was no harme meant, yet an eye may be lost except the occasion be prevented.

To make your buttons take wooll or flocks, and wrappe it round in leather so bigge as a Tennis-ball, then make a notch within halfe an inch of your wooden foile or staffe, but if it be an Iron foile, then let there be an Iron button rivetted on the point, so broad as two pence, and then take your button being made as

beforesaid, and set it on the end of your Staffe or Foile likewise, and then take leather and draw hard upon it, and binde it with Shoormakers-ends or pa[c]k-thread in the notch, and another leather uppon that againe, for one leather may bee worne out with a little practise.

Web Watch

Some interesting web sites lately discovered:

<http://www.wp.com/livinghistory/> The web site of Living history magazine. They seem to be in the process of moving, so it may take a bit of poking around to find the new site. They seem to have a reasonably good listing of living history events in the US.

<http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~wew/fencing.html> An interesting and useful site on Elizabethan fencing.

<http://www.elegantia.demon.co.uk/index.html> The Elizabethan Experience, a commercial outfit in London that performs an Elizabethan show connected at least in part with the Golden Hind, which is now apparently docked in London.

Ren Faire Sites

<http://www.renfaire.com/> A general site on ren fairs, mostly of the Californian breed.

<http://renaissance.dm.net/> "The Elizabethan World"--an interesting general compendium of information on Elizabethan life.

http://www.webcom.com/st_mike/welcome.html The site for the Guild of St. Michael, one of the military re-enactment groups at the California fairs.

Re-Enactor's Corner

It's always good to keep abreast of what's happening in other re-enactment groups. The following came down the wire, and seemed to be something that everyone ought to know about:

Date: Sun, 12 Apr 1998 10:58:40

Subject: Reenactment...

John Raven reported in the February issue of 'The Goat Gap Gazette', Vol. 28; issue 2, "My newly formed Hunters and Gatherers Reenactment Society (HGRS) is getting ready for its first event. I put this thing together for the poor people who want to reenact a part of history, but can't afford all the equippage required to be a Confederate or a Yankee. All you need is a breechclout and a sharp stick. Breechclout available at Oshman's for \$39.95 plus tax and the sharp stick from Gunz and Stuff, \$42.50 and up, depending on the caliber.

"If all goes according to plan, we are going to purchase a used elephant and reenact a Mammoth kill

this summer. (I wouldn't tell my insurance man about this.) Score on the last mammoth hunt was Big Hairy Elephant 13-HGRS 1. Our sympathy to the families of the flat 13."

Suppliers

Kit and Kaboodle (David Green). Our most recent find: an admirable sutler specializing in basic kit. His ECW clothes are the highest standard I have ever seen commercially available. Malt Kiln Cottage, Alne, North Yorkshire YO61 1TT ENGLAND (01347) 838-423; kaboodle@mcmail.com; www.kaboodle.mcmail.com.

Del Tin Armi Antiche SNC. One of the world's best suppliers of historical weaponry. Via dei Fabbri 13, I-33085 Maniago PN, Italy; ++39 (427) 72-550. Makers of quality reproduction weapons. fulviold@agemont.it. <http://www.italpro.com/deltin/index.htm>.

Quartermasterie. A dealer in various small goods, including knitted wear, shoes, coins, ceramics, and other accoutrements; his goods are always of the highest quality. Ian Skipper, Flat 1, Shelley Court, 4 Lovelace Rd., Surbiton, Surrey KT6 6NP; (0181) 399-2409.

Steve Millingham, Church Tower Mint, Hopton Cangeford, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 ZEE; tel/fax (01584) 823-304. Carries excellent pewterware and delftware; items include a 17c watch.

Needleworker's Corner

A new source recently discovered: Taylor, John, *Praise of the Needle* [1631], ed. Kathleen Epstein (Austin: Curious Works Press). Annotated edition of Taylor's poem on embroidery. Available from Curious Works Press, 107 RR 620 So. #11-E, Austin TX 78734.