

The Fencers, Dancers, and Bearbaiters Quarterly

The Newsletter of the Traynd Bandes in North America

Vol. X, No. 1 *"Ever But in Times of Need At Hand"* January 2002

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 Companie (centered in Virginia-Maryland), the Tabard Inn Society (centered in Ontario), and the Westminster Trayn'd Bandes (centered in Texas),

The FDBQ will be published bi-annually by Gardiner's Companie.

Official Gardner's Calendar

January

Work Weekend - 19 January 2002 at Bob N Laura's place in VA. Crash space must be coordinated with Laura in advance (301) 617-0843. (elsworth@erols.com). Projects include clearing the land for more fighting, some paths to the creek and around. Needs to be done while the poison ivy is dormant. Bob has put out some information already.

Yule - 26 January 2002 at the Hays House in Bel Air, Maryland. RSVP 19 Jan 2002 to Laura Mellin (301) 617-0843 (elsworth@erols.com) or Sandy Toscano (410) 515-9230 (jimandsandytoscano@home.com

March

Military Through the Ages - 16-17 March 2002. We as a group go down to Jamestown and assist the folks at the Fort during a very busy time for them. We also close the day with a small period evening, eating up the cooking demonstration done throughout the day. Point of contact is Greg Glewwe at glewweg@adelphia.net. (301) 698-1269.

May

Mousehole - 16-19 May 2002. At Bob 'n Laura's place in Arvonnia, Va. This event is great fun with loads of skirmishing, shooting, and whatever else we can think of. Point contact for info is Sandy at (410) 515-9230 email is jimandsandytoscano@home.com . More info will follow.

August

Pennsic - 10-18 August 2002. This is the second week of Pennsic, when most people arrive. We are camping with Lochmere this year. Point of Contact is Sandy at (410) 515-9230 email is jimandsandytoscano@home.com .

WORKSHOPS

At this time there are no workshops on the calendar. If you have an interest in hosting one please contact Sandy.

There may be an sewing/patterning workshop on April 13 in Arvonnia. Stay tuned.....

CONTACTS

Trayn'd Bandes of London:

Jeffrey L. Forgeng (Clerk/Education Officer)
7 Shaw Court, Plymouth, MA 02360 USA
jforgeng@higgins.org

Tabard Inn Society:

Nancy Crozier (President)
276 Silver Branch Ave., Toronto ONT M4E 3L5 CANADA
nancyc@mssoc.ca

Phil Collman (Education Officer)
599 Delaware Ave., Toronto ONT M6H 2V3 CANADA
phil@sickkids.on.ca



Westminster Trayn'd Bandes:

Jennifer Davis & James Barnes
11612 Fast Horse Dr., Austin, TX 78759
USA
jbnjenny@io.com

Gardiners Companie:

Sandy Toscano (President)
3146 Hidden Ridge Terrace
Abingdon, MD 21009 USA
sandra.toscano@apg.amedd.army.mil

Jeff Morgan (Education Officer)
1663 Stoney Creek Road,
Charlottesville, VA 22902 USA
thegambles@cstone.net

Gardiners Companie Website:
www.crosswinds.net/~gardiners/fdbbq

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Book Review

by Cathy Snell

The New Oxford Book of Carols

Edited by Hugh Keyte and Andrew Parrott,
Oxford University Press, 1992.

This book is a wonderful resource for discovering holiday music appropriate to our period. It provides an excellent, in depth look at carols from around the world from the Middle Ages through the 20th century. A somewhat scholarly work, it is designed to give performers modern and original arrangements as well as history for the over 200 carols included. The definition of 'carol' used in this books includes religious, composed, and traditional songs generally jubilant in nature and related to the winter holiday season.

Of the approximately 75 carols dated prior to 1600, there are a few that will sound familiar to the modern ear. These include "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel!", "There is No Rose of Such Vertue", "The Coventry Carol", "Good Christian Men, Rejoice", "Lo! How a Rose, e're Blooming", and "The First Nowell". There are many other interesting carols waiting to be rediscovered.

Gardiner's T-Shirts!

T-Shirt and sweatshirt sales have been successful. Since the printer will have our design on file, the next time we place an order the minimum is 12 shirts. Greg and Diane will accept future orders as they come and when at least twelve are in hand, an order will be placed.

T-shirts are available in blue or gray. Sizes small, medium, large, and x-large are \$12 and xx-large are \$14. Youth sizes are available and are \$7. Lightweight gray sweatshirts are available. Sizes small, medium, large, and x-large are \$18 and xx-large are \$20. Shipping via US Express mail is available for an additional \$4.

The Tavern

by Bob & Laura Mellin

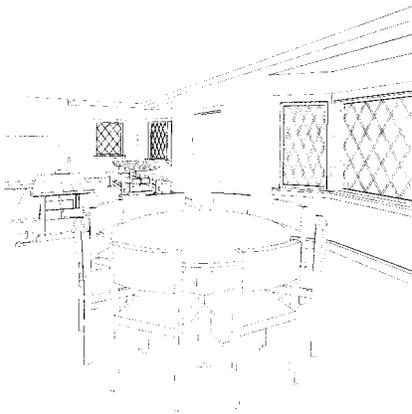
Many of you have heard us talk about “The Tavern” and some of you may have an idea what we mean. With the purchase of the farm in Virginia this last year, the Tavern is less a dream than it had been. We’d like to share with you the plans we’ve made so far to bring our dream to fruition.

Our first priority is to build a new modern house on the site. We hope to build much of this ourselves, living in the farmhouse while we do the work. Once it is completed, we’ll move there permanently. Somewhere close to where the farmhouse is now located, we’ll build the Tavern. The first step will be the demolition of the farmhouse, salvaging much of it for use in the Tavern itself (the older part of the farmhouse is timber-framed), Much of the fixtures, kitchen cabinets, bathroom fixtures, roof tiles, etc. can be used in the Tavern. The Tavern will be placed to make use of the existing well house and septic field.

The Tavern will be approximately 40 feet by 25 feet (for reference, the period hall in the farmhouse is approximately 16 feet by 22 feet). The first floor will consist of the Great hall and a 9 foot by 12 foot kitchen in the back corner. The kitchen will have electric lights and running water, a refrigerator, a freezer, and a gas stove (in other words, it’ll be a modern kitchen). The Great Hall will be period - timber-framed, whitewashed walls, mullioned windows, a large fireplace, with no visible electric in the room. There will be several trestle tables and benches, and a settle or two, as well as a cupboard for mugs and plates.

A staircase will lead to the second floor, where there will be toilets, sinks, a shower, 2 changing/storage rooms and a large bunkroom. This floor will have electric, lights, heat and air conditioning. The bunkroom will have an outside stair leading down to the rear of the Tavern. Those arriving for an event would bring their items up to the second floor from the outside. Once changed and in persona, they would descend to the Great Hall. This way, late comers/early leavers can join/leave the event without imposing non-period clothing and equipment on the rest. A parking area will be behind the tavern, hidden from the period area in front.

The Tavern will be timber-framed (for those interested, close studded on the first floor, square framed on the second) using trees from the farm. It will sit on concrete piers which will be covered by a low, stone plinth wall. There will be two large bay windows. The second floor will have 2 jettied bays; that is, they will extend out some 2 feet beyond the first floor, over the bay windows.

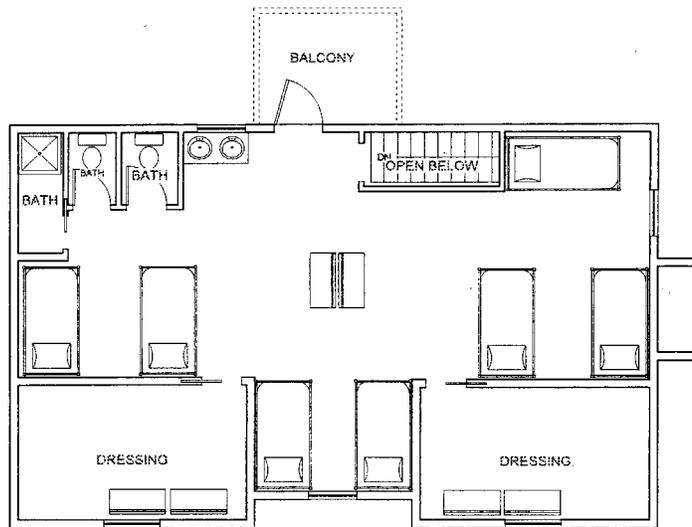
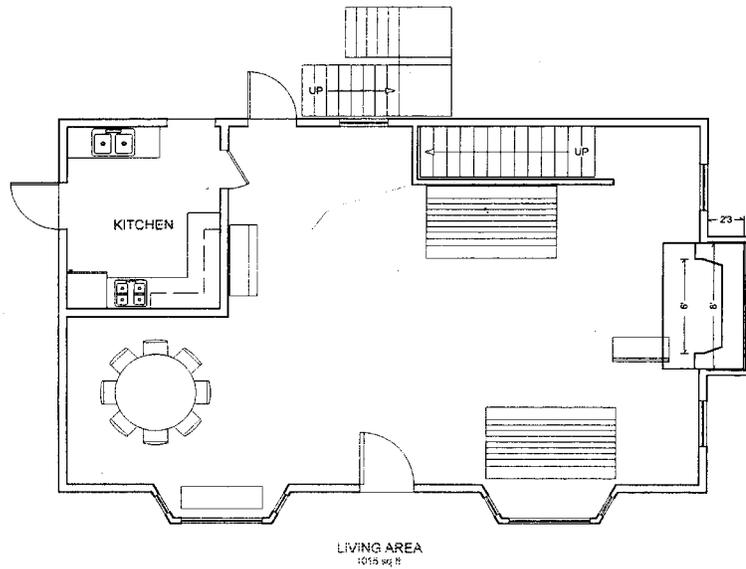


On the eastside of the Tavern, will be an outdoor kitchen with a stone oven and cook area, tables for preparation, all surrounded by a stone wall. This kitchen will be connected to the indoor kitchen, and meals can be served in the yard or in the hall. On the westside of the Tavern, will be the chimney, topped with Tudor brickwork. Fences will hide access roads and non-period equipment.

The lawn area in front of the Tavern will be for period tent camping, drill, games, and whatever takes our fancy. We’re working on how to use propane to create cressets, period street lights that burned logs. A road in front of the Tavern will lead to gardens, fighting areas, perhaps the ruins of an old abbey. The trails will also lead to our home, the stream and a lovely small waterfall that’s on the southeast corner of the property. In time, other buildings can be built around the tavern. Who knows, that Elizabethan Village may spring up yet!

We realize this sounds somewhat fanciful. However, we suspect some of you thought the same about our buying land in the first place. There will be some costs associated with it, even using native timber and recycling the farmhouse and outbuildings. It will certainly require a lot of labor, and any help will be most appreciated. But the hurdles we have to overcome are insignificant compared to what it will mean to have such a grand structure to hold our events in. As the skirmish events in May and October showed, Mousehole at the farmhouse isn't quite the expedition it used to be. With our living full time on the site, it will become as easy as day tripping an SCA event.

We'll continue to keep you updated on developments, and will continue to share our drawings, models, and plans with you. Your knowledge, ideas, and expertise in matters Elizabethan, as well as construction, will be invaluable to achieving this dream. We're quite excited about the prospects and know that you are as well.



Carols of Christmas

by Diane Glewwe

Carol or a hymn? Modern definitions of the two words almost blend them together, but in the Church of the Middle Ages (476-1543) the attitude toward music was severe and quite distinct. The main purpose of music was believed to be its function. Music was to uplift the soul to contemplation of divine things. It influenced the listener towards good or evil. Hymn is from the Latin word, "hymnus", meaning song of praise. Music that inspired only self-centered enjoyment was rejected.

Early carols were often happy and festive, unlike the hymn which is usually solemn and doctrinal, and written in Latin as well. The stories Carols told were done so in everyday language that all people could understand. During much of the Middle Ages the carol was excluded from all church worship.

Ancient Christmas Music for Acoustic Guitar by Gerard Garno is the main source of this information. Garno has an extensive bibliography as well as a list of periodicals noted. There are many more carols mentioned in the book than I have written about. Every one is accompanied by historical notes. Following is the history of a few commonly known and sung Christmas Carols.

Ding Dong Merrily on High

This is a secular dance song, "Branle de l'Official" (Dance of the Official) which appears in the 1588 publication *Orchesographie* by Thoinot Arbeau. Even though the music is of an early period date, this melody was not turned into a carol until the late nineteenth century.

I Saw Three Ships

A traditional tune it exists in many variants. Christmas ties go back to a tale based on that of Mediterranean journeys of supposed relics of the Magi, also known as the Three Kings or Wise Men. It is said that the Roman Empress Helena, Mother of Constantine the Great, carried the remains of the Wise Men to Constantinople in the fourth century. From there the remains were taken to Milan by St Eustanthius. In 1162 they were donated to the Cologne Cathedral by Friedrich Barbarossa. A bishop named Renaldus brought them there in a jeweled casket. They remain there to this day and are referred to as "The Three Kings of Cologne". The sailing ships that carried the remains have been molded by folk tradition to represent the joy of the Christmas story. This carol has been very popular in England and the fact that the country is surrounded by water helps to explain the Maritime theme.

The Holly and The Ivy

Origins of this song appear to be Medieval but other sources take it back further and link it to its pagan roots. The Holly is the male and the Ivy is the female principles in nature. In the refrain Sun and animal worship may be interpreted. In the version that is so popular to most of us today Christian symbolism may be interpreted with the Holly being representative of good and the Ivy as evil. With it, there is the obvious comparison of the holly plant to represent the life of Christ from birth to the crucifix.

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

This 12 c text based upon a series of "O" antiphons sung at vespers leading up to Christmas Day. The monks would begin on Dec. 16 singing with a short prayer stanza and add more onto it each day. Translated in 1851, Thomas Helmore is credited with arranging the ancient mode 1 (Dorian) plainsong. It is not certain whether the chant is exactly the same one that was historically sung with the text.

The First Good Joy That Mary Had

This is a fifteenth century numeral carol in which the text has numbers that rhyme with words. As a devotion to Mary (476-1543) it originally existed as a medieval manuscript carol.

Coventry Carol

Though this is a modern title, the carol is excerpted from an earlier cycle of mystery plays performed annually in Coventry, England on the feast of Corpus Christi. In the early sixteenth century it is attributed to the Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors. The song occurs toward the end of the play when Herod's soldiers are seeking out infants for slaughter. It is a lullaby sung by the mothers, in hiding with their infants, in an effort to help the infants sleep so the soldiers would not hear them cry.

People have heard many of these songs every Christmas season, yet there is doubt that many people know of the history behind these carols. May it bring a great satisfaction in knowing the history lives in this traditional music.

Bread During the Reign of Elizabeth I

by Sandy Toscano

During the Elizabethan era in England (1558-1603) the type of bread someone ate was determined by their class in society. Different grains and the coarseness of grind determined who could afford the bread. The softest whitest wheat was reserved for the nobility while dark coarse grain blends went into the bread consumed by the lower classes.

The types of grain first grown in pre-Roman English history were mainly emmer wheat and naked barley. These grains were roughly ground and when added to water made a very simple, coarse hearth cake. When the Romans came to England, they brought with them new grains and new technologies to process the grain into flour. Club wheat, spelt, oats and hulled barley became more common. Barley was the most common because of its use in ale as well as a source of bread flour. The Romans also brought with them better parching techniques (to separate the grain from the chaff) and the rotary quern for grinding.

When the Romans left, they took with them much of the manpower needed to make the soil viable to grow wheat. Wheat was labor intensive to produce and required a richer soil and a less fickle weather pattern. To guard against a poor harvest due to the weather, a mix of rye and wheat known as maslin became common. Rye is a hardier grain and not so easily spoiled by bad weather. Fields of pure wheat were planted where the soil and climate could support it as well as fields of pure rye. Maslin was ground together, or the maslin would be made after grinding by combining the ground wheat with the ground rye. Proportions varied regionally. "The kinds of bread that people ate depended largely on the grains grown in their particular region, although price was also important" (Lorwin, 214). In the wetter northern climates, oats provided the bread flour.

The poorest would glean the fields after harvesting for whatever grains they could find. When these were inadequate, beans and peas would be ground and added with other grains or used alone as bread flour. During a poor harvest season, even the middle-class had to use ground peas or beans.

Since the Roman period, soft white wheat bread was the preferred bread. The whitest flour came from sifting the ground grain through the finest sieve or cloth. "In the Middle Ages white wheat bread of the finest quality only appeared on the tables of the well-to-do. The best soil in the country was given over to wheat, which fetched a higher price than any of the other cereals" (Wilson, 238). The husks from the finest sifting would be either reground or added to a more coarsely sifted flour. The coarser flour not only yielded a darker or brown bread, but it was less expensive so the lower to middle class used this flour for their bread.

In general, there were two methods for leavening bread. The yeast would be cultured in ale barm (liquid yeast) or cultured in leftover dough from the previous bread baking. The most favored in England was culturing the yeast in ale barm. The barm would then be used to make more ale and for the making of bread. Ale barm was also considered superior to sourdough in leavening bread. "The ancient spontaneous leaven and sourdough systems were all right for bread made from coarse brown meal, but for the fine light bread liked by the gentry, a good barm was needed" (David, 90). Using leftover dough (sourdough) could only be used to make more bread and was most often used for leavening coarser bread. The middle class could afford to brew their own ale, while the lower classes could not afford the necessary equipment. Therefore, the lower classes would generally use sourdough leavening for their bread.

Bread was an important staple in Elizabethan society. The different type of bread, varied by grains and softness, reflected the status of the consumer. The softer, whiter bread became a status symbol among the nobility. The middle-class would buy the better quality bread for special occasions, but generally made a coarser bread. The poor had to settle for the least desirable coarser bread and only experienced the soft white bread of the nobility when it came their way through the monasteries and churches on special festivals as alms-bread.

Works Cited:

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- Lorwin, Madge. Dining with William Shakespeare. New York: Atheneum, 1976.
- Wilson, C. Anne. Food and Drink in Britain: from the Stone Age to the 19th Century. Chicago: Academy Chicago Publishers, 1991.