

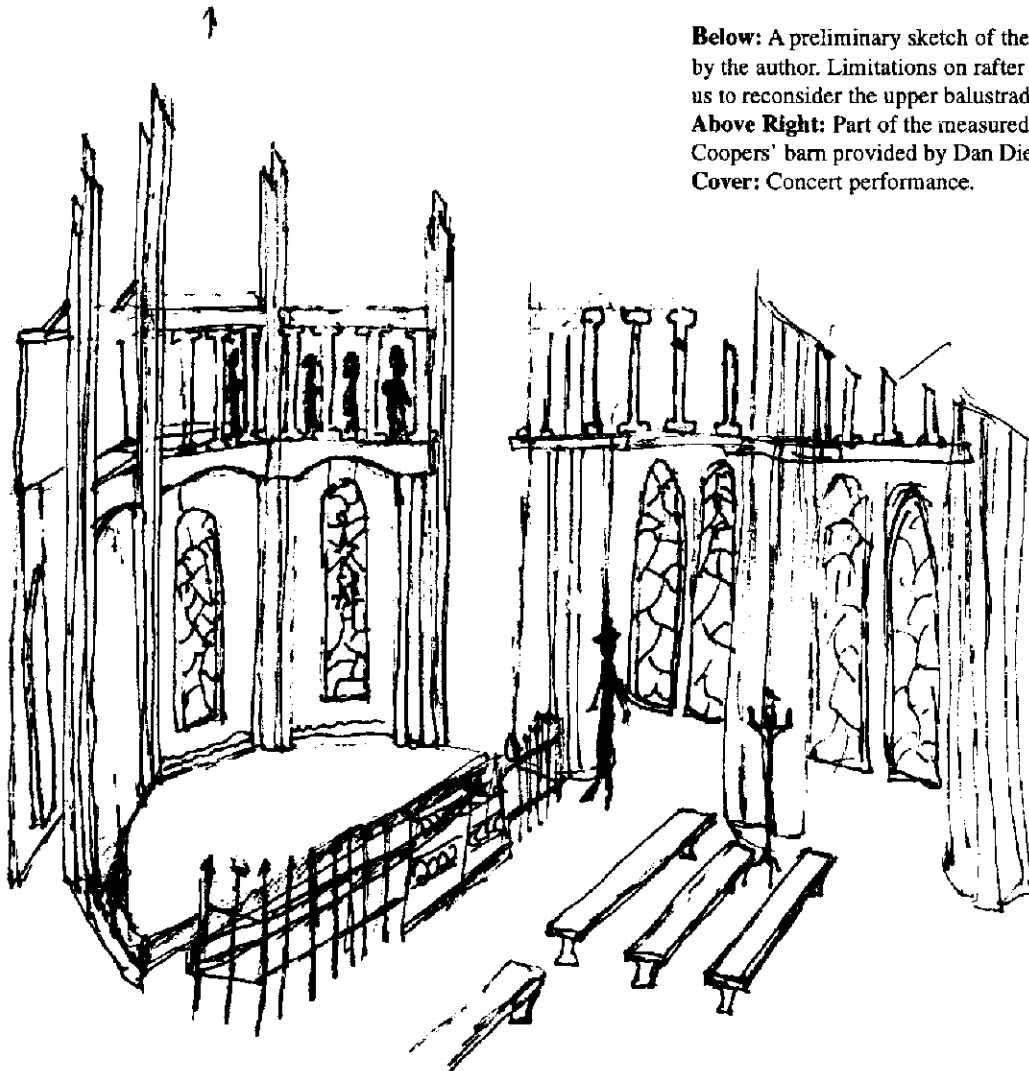
As is perhaps common knowledge by now, the Chartres project began with a perception of injustice. It was unjust for the Interkingdom Choir to perform so beautifully last year in such a mundane setting. What follows is a chronicle of how the reconstruction of the Cathedral at Chartres came to be at the 23rd Pennsic gathering, on August 19, 1994.

Initially, we had envisioned the Chartres setting in more suggestive form – a couple of stained glass windows, perhaps some masking and a few stage lights. As is often the case with projects that are allowed to remain in the talking stages for too long, however, we began to develop a grander plan: gigantic columns, 9-ft. windows, life-sized sculptures, chanting monks, candelabras. Had I known then what I know now... There were moments of utter despair and frus-

tration, yet times when we saw inertia turn to action, and the best qualities of Society members sprang to life. In hindsight, I believe our efforts were well rewarded.

For a couple of months, I did a lot of verbal designing, primarily with Mark Rubenstein (Lord Aelfric of Sarisberie), as we considered various ways in which we might construct the various set pieces. In February, I wrote Dan Diehl (Capt. Frederick von Schwarzbourg), a guild member who lives in Pittsburgh, begging him to go to Cooper's Lake and measure the barn for us. To my astonishment, he responded with a complete set of measured drawings, photos of the barn's interior and an offer of further help with faux painting.

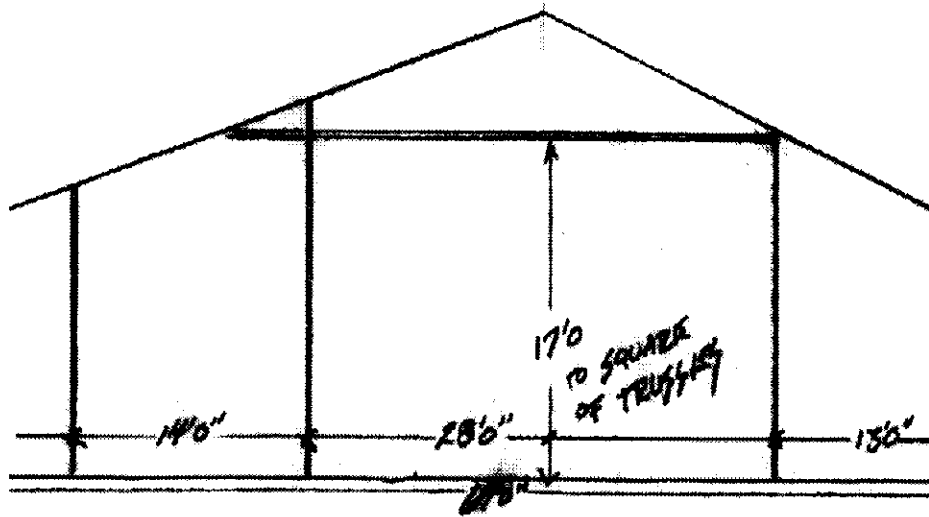
With the blueprints in hand, I felt confident enough to go to the Pennsic autocrat and the head of the choir with the idea. As indicated by the excerpted letters, both Baron Bran and Mistress Josselynn found the idea of



Below: A preliminary sketch of the proposed set by the author. Limitations on rafter height forced us to reconsider the upper balustrades later.

Above Right: Part of the measured drawing of the Coopers' barn provided by Dan Diehl.

Cover: Concert performance.



converting the barn to a "sacred space" compelling. Without either of these key people, the project would have died on the table.

In earnest, we returned to the drawing board. As I have suggested with previous projects, I felt it important that the Chartres setting look impossible, that visitors really sense the "presence" of a cathedral space. The columns, although meant more as a frame than a focal point for the space, proved both difficult and time consuming, both in conception and construction. How

big should they be? How far apart would they be spaced? Should they be trimmed or not? How high should the bases stand from the floor? Perhaps most importantly, should we try to include the upper balustrade sections seen at Chartres, with all of their inset statuary? I felt the statuary extremely important to the "humanness" of the setting.

I answered many of these questions by returning to the original sources: my books on Chartres (see accompanying bibliography). I noticed, for example, that

I anticipate no problems with your having the barn starting from 6:00 pm for your cathedral set-up prior to the inter-kingdom choir performance at 8:30 pm. Both your set-up and the choir performance itself have been scheduled in the Pennsic Master Schedule.

Please know that I have long been an admirer of your efforts at the War (though I never knew just who was actually achieving these architectural wonders) and look forward to yet another magnificent work. You may count on whatever assistance I can provide.

You have my deepest gratitude for bringing something special to Pennsic 23. I am in your debt.

Best regards,

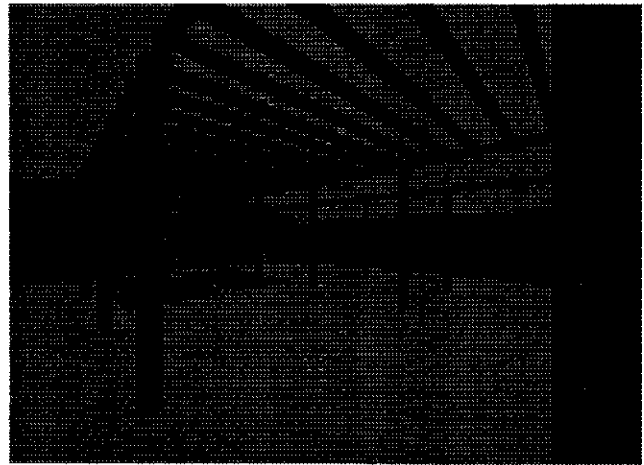
Bran Trefonnen

Bran Trefonnen,
Baron Sacred Stone
Pennsic 23 Autocrat

in part of the cathedral's crypt, the builders alternated plain columns with those with triple moldings. Even so, I still couldn't be certain how the columns should shape the space of the barn without a model.

At this point I turned to a modern tool. Having done a little design using Macintosh computers, I took the Cooper's barn blueprint and converted it into a 3-D drawing on my computer using Virtus Walkthrough Pro, a real-time 3-D animation program. I then generated columns of various shapes and configurations and placed them into this "virtual" space. By putting the camera view at the height of an observer, I gained a sense of how the space would work. The balustrades had to go. They stole from the sweeping height of the main columns. And I found that I would need 11 columns, separated by 10 windows to create a genuine nave. This sounds much easier and faster than it really was. Frankly, I suspect I spent as much time designing the set as I did actually building it, but when I was finished, I had a complete animated 3-D movie to show how all of the elements would work together in the context of the space. As a footnote, I would add that if any guild member ever wants to build something in the barn, I will supply copies of the blueprints and/or the Virtus file containing the 3-D model of the barn's interior.

At about this point, with the design finished, dividing the labor became a paramount concern. Re-



sponses to the initial appeal in *Sacred Spaces* came in at a rather tepid pace, and Hilary and I suddenly realized that we might have overestimated the potential for group participation from the Guild. We even considered scrapping the project, but I couldn't bear the thought of quitting. Maybe that's why my friend Sir Brian McNaughton informed me at Pennsic that I am clinically insane. Hilary and I began work immediately on the first of the two statues, St. Theodore and Melchisidek.

We soon learned a hard lesson about the forces of inertia – how great a gulf exists between the discussion of a project and the point where the talking stops and hands-on help begins. We found ourselves working

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Sir Arloff;

Thank you for the good news! It is wonderful to hear that we will be doing such an incredible project together. The difference that such efforts make is amazing. Let's hope it comes off as well as we envision...

I have been doing some research on music which would have been performed at Chartres, in the genre that the Pennsic Choir is best known for - large-scale motets and polychoral music. It's been easier to find than expected! A repertoire list is underway, and it seemed like a good idea to share with you some of the publications I've found to contain valuable information. A list is included of what is available at San Jose State University, and if you'd like to know anything more about them, let me know.

Let me know your thoughts. Again, I'm really looking forward to this; it's a good way to wake people up...

In Service,

Josselyne

Chartres Project (continued)

alone. After considering the yawning chasm of work that lay ahead of us, we elected to hold our own project night in lieu of the local group's "sewing circle." While this choice didn't provide us with any extra help, it simplified the labor by allowing us to work on the statues without moving them, and later gave us enough space to work on the windows. For the remainder of the summer, we abandoned the concept of housecleaning. At times, 80 percent of the floorspace was covered with windows at various stages of completion.

After the Spring issue of *Sacred Spaces*, we were greatly encouraged when another handful of Guild members came forward to help, both financially and physically. Nathan Wright (Natan of Windhaven) gave us a shock when he sent a check for \$100 toward the construction. To our delight, three people volunteered to create the templates for the stained glass windows.

Lady Crystian the Undecided, Mary Bothwell (Marie De Rossett) and Lord Thomas DeWinterwade (not a Guild member, but from our local province)

My husband and I would like to help with the Chartres Project, in particular with the iron candelabras and chandeliers. My husband is a machinist, welder, blacksmith, etc. and figured it should be fairly easy for him to do. He has his own shop and just might have a lot of the materials "laying around" the shop. The only problem we see at this point is we will not be going to Pennsic. We can ship the pieces in time for Pennsic. We will work with you on this. This is a fantastic idea - good luck!

Sincerely,
Sally Boberg

Greetings to Artof, Count of Aranmore from Lady Allsoun Fortescue of Maplehurst.

Your words of concern about Chartres did not fall upon deaf ears. Please accept my apologies for not coming forward sooner to provide some assistance. There was not much in the original list of needs that I thought I could do, but I see two needs for which I can help:

I can sew and am willing to make a monk's robe. I'd even be willing to wear one if you lack for volunteers, assuming that the hood will conceal the fact that I am a woman. If the robe is for someone other than myself, I will need the following measurements:

Chartres Project (continued)

would supply the talent and labor. Thomas finished his templates first, and delivered them to us at the monthly province meeting. Marie followed, with Crystian giving us a bit of a scare by delivering her last template on the weekend prior to Pennsic. Nonetheless, we were overjoyed to receive it.

Hilary and I had just moved into a new house in Maine, a place with absolutely no storage space. In order to keep the Chartres elements dry all summer, I had to dedicate one weekend to erecting a temporary “carport”. Richard gave me quite a compliment when he said, “You know, I think that’s the best built temporary structure I’ve ever seen!”

With the storage space in place, we began collecting the necessary materials, hardware and paints to make the columns and windows. Because I work full time, however, the burden fell on Hilary, (who also works full time as a mother). She spent untold hours, every day for weeks, carting our 9-month-old daugh-

ter from hardware store to hobby shop to paint supplier, trying to keep pace with the rate of building. I also devoted a couple of hours every other day to managing the various volunteers – making sure everyone had the information necessary to continue on their elements of the setting. For example, I sent full-scale templates of the upper arc of each type of stained glass window to the template makers, to be sure their templates would fit in my frames! We also had to agree on who would make which window, to avoid duplication, and each artist wanted to know to what degree of complexity to make the replica.

At about the same time, Sally Boberg and her husband, Lord Ferriss Nelson of the Falcon, agreed to make some candelabras. I remained in contact with them off and on throughout the summer. For those who attended the performance, their candelabras stood beneath the statues as you entered the nave. Early in the summer, I spent an afternoon helping Lord Richard vom

Chartres Project (continued)

Alaricsberg, who designed the candelabras, to construct part of one candelabra. He later finished that one and built another one – and delivered them to my doorstep just in time to load into the trailer.

Throughout the summer, Hilary and I worked constantly, every evening, every weekend, pausing only to sigh heavily, eat occasionally and curse whoever dreamed up this horrible, life-draining, summer-ruining project. The months of May and June were by far the most difficult. Many of our friends who had spoken with such animation about the project in the early stages had other, totally valid priorities. Discouraging

comments trickled down to us from skeptical members of the local province.

At about this time, I called my friend Duke Merowald in Florida for a little support. “You’re not a great leader,” he told me. “If you were a great leader, other people would be doing all the work.

“Your problem is,” he continued, “you’re a good leader, and a good artist, but because it’s your vision, you have to expect to do the work. You can’t expect everybody else to get as excited about this as you are.” His words stung a little, because I knew he was right. My stubborn, perfectionist side often frightens away people

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