

Letters —

Research and drafting help wanted

My lord, I have been in a quandary over a certain point in my research as I write a "Companion to the Early Irish Sagas". The goal of my university level work is to present the ancient tales in their original Gaelic with my layout and several noted scholars rendering the stories, in such a way that even a non-Gaelic reader may study the sagas in detail.

Costumes and buildings will be illustrated as best it may be determined by the translations and archeological evidence. I need someone to work with me to create architectural drawings and illustrations of how the buildings at Cruachan, Emain Macha, Cathir Con Roi, Tara, Da Derga's Hostel, and several others may have looked. Also I need illustrations of weapons, chariots and costumes.

Ms. Kerry Herrington

Lord Ciard mac Rudhain O'Seachnasaigh
Poet Laureate of Axemore, Meridies

If you want to help Ms. Herrington (she has a male persona), please write to her at:

4915 Alvin Dark #15016
Baton Rouge, LA 70820

Exciting work in the North Country

I am involved in the S.C.A. Shire of Lyndhaven (Frederickton, New Brunswick, Canada). One of the groups we are associated with is a non-S.C.A. medieval recreation group, the Barbarian Freehold of Tir, in Houlton, Maine. Organized by renowned Celtic harpmaker Jay Witcher, the farm they (and we) occasionally use is wondrous, consisting of a collection of rebuilt medieval structures (Celtic roundhouses, Russian stilt houses, etc.) surrounding a rebuilt Viking longhouse and boathouse, complete with a nearly finished Viking longship.

Jay has been helping a few of us with designs for a longhouse reconstruction of our own, which we hope to undertake in the Spring, as long as we can obtain all of the necessary building materials in time. The finished structure will likely be a log longhouse, in the aisle-post construction style, measuring 24' x 60', capable of seating upwards of forty, and sleeping twenty comfortably.

In planning this, I also have received advice and assistance from the Canadian government's chief archaeologist for Viking antiquities in Canada, who oversaw a similar reconstruction at the site of the Viking town of L'Anse aux Meadeaux, Newfoundland; and from the Director of the National Museum of Ireland, whose museum maintains a series of reconstructions near their *Dublin 2000* site.

So, as you can see, I have been developing a keen interest in period architecture here in the shire, and many of us are interested in the information we can find in—and perhaps provide to your newsletter.

Rick Gaigneur

Frederickton, N.B., CANADA

Some suggested how-to topics

An article about staking down tents in really strong winds might be nice. We live in a calm, safe place where it rarely rains. We've put tents up for years with no problems. We took a 15-foot hexagonal thing to TFYC and a little tornado came and lifted it up, twisted the steel frame and chucked it all back down... How about knot tying? Like, for instance, good rigging for lowering a chandelier or lantern from the top of a pavilion to light it.

Sandra Dodd

Mistress Aelflead of Duckford

A response to the "why a guild" question

First and foremost is the combination of access to a clearinghouse of information on our period's architecture, and a forum within which to share and debate ideas about it. Add to that the possibility of camaraderie with others "of a similar bent" a cliché referring to bents of a timber frame structure (cruck buildings)... and the chance that projects and thoughts on wood crafting I enjoy will be seen and judged by those who appreciate it for what it is, rather than merely for the carving and other incidentals added thereunto, as is now the case too often.

Pavilion side poles: As to the letter on side poles for pavilions, some tents did use side poles that may have been cut on site, but that holds true for tent types used in the Americas by Europeans and Americans... The designs of most western European tents show in painting after painting ropes that are very often bridled together. Most of our [replica] tentmakers agree that in period side poles were probably little if ever used, and are suggested only for events where there is a restriction of area (such as Pennsic). It should also be

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remembered that by the middle of the SCA period, most of England was suffering from a lack of wood.

Marc Rubinstein

Lord Aelfric of Sarisberie

Another Source for Cauldrons, etc.

In response to [Ruth Ann Stahl's] inquiry, the following outlet provides cast iron cauldrons for cooking:

The Cumberland General Store

Route 3, Box 81

Crossville, Tennessee 38555

1-800-334-4640

They also offer a number of interesting wares: wooden buckets and tubs, anvils, etc.

Michael Mayer

A Period Cooler

It seems to me that the perfect concealment for an icebox is a medieval chest or coffer. A permanent shell would be much neater and more efficient than a drop cloth. The difficulties would be many: put a shell around an ice box; limit the weight, perhaps add wheels, include wood carving or details... People Who Know may be able to obviate these and other problems and make our feast halls potentially neater and more authentic looking.

Amy Huber

Glastonbury Chair, Anyone?

I am trying to find plans or drawings for a specific period chair, called Glastonbury chairs. The May/June 1993 issue of *Woodwork* magazine featured an article on a gentleman in England who is apparently the only one who still makes these. They are supposed to date from 1504. I would appreciate any information.

Robert M. Coulter

Punched Tin Lamps

Can anyone tell me how appropriate punched tin is? Also, has the flame resistance of canvas treated with water sealant been tested? Things are so cramped at Pennsic I fear my hard work could go up in flames and me with it!

Tina Carney-Lytle

Brighid the Ageless