

To the Men and Women of the Raven, greetings.

Hello Everyone,

I trust that you are all in good health. Those of you who managed to get to the banquet I am told had a good time. Sandra was presented with the Kunungr's Award of Merit and Manaraefan won the George Haye Memorial Shield for Best Herred. So congratulations one and all, keep up the good work.

Also, for those of you who know Dylan - Sue and Simon's - will be pleased to know that a kidney donor had been found for him and he is now on the road to recovery, I'm sure your best wishes go to him.

First show of the season will be for the Young Archaeologists in Minehead, full details enclosed.

We have as a group been approached about a show in Exeter on the 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> August which will be a multi-period event. Sadly last year this clashed with a Major show, but this year the calendar is free so... details for this will be available a little closer to the time as and when they are finalised.

As most of you will be aware, the foot and mouth precautions currently in place request that people stay off land which is or has been occupied by animals. English Heritage has closed off a great many of its sites - including for that matter some in the middle towns - this may effect at least a couple of the major shows this year. This will probably include Old Sarum, Battle Abbey, Kirby Hall and the Exeter major (I've yet to check out where the one we have been asked to do is effected yet). Leixlip has definitely been cancelled. Our minor shows and school visits will probably play a larger role this year if this problem persists.

Quote from John Nicholl - Leixlip organiser

"It was a difficult decision to make but in the end we had no choice. Besides the fact that the Castle is a working farm, as is the Wonderful Barn where we camp, the County Council were not going to allow us to proceed anyway due to F&M.

It is a pity after all the planning we had put into making this show the highpoint of the weekend's events. On behalf of the Committee I have been asked to thank everyone who had planned to come over in June and especially John and Russ for their time and trouble in organising everything.

I know that it is not much consolation at present but we do intend to stage the event next year, so hopefully, we will get to meet again in Leixlip."

John Nicholl

Training at Hudsons field is currently on hold as there are sheep fields next door. For the moment we are meeting up at my place and either getting on with making stuff, or just generally having a natter, all are welcome, give us a ring on (01980) 594953 if you need directions, we can always have a fight in the back garden.

We have been asked to supply people for some film work in June 16th/17<sup>th</sup> in the village of Orgreave, Sheffield. This is not Viking re-enactment; Channel 4 wish to produce a documentary about the clash between the minors and the police in 1984. Several hundred combat trained re-enactors are better than normal extras for this, and cheaper than several hundred stuntmen. As to the ethics of this, they have been greatly discussed on email list, full details attached at the end of this newsletter; make your own minds up.

I am trying to put together a list of traders both in the society, and people who make kit within the group to help people find what they are looking for, or the person to show them how to do it themselves. If you have any skills which you want to share with us, shout and I'll add it to this list. It will hopefully be available within the next couple of weeks or in the next Raven's Wing. look forward to hearing from you.

Membership renewals are now overdue. Please can everyone who owes membership pay as soon as possible. Those who didn't arrange to pay later than 31st Jan, the overdue membership rates apply - £15 for adults and 75p for children. If you find that you have problems paying this but would still like to renew, I'm sure that we can come to some arrangement. I now have in my possession the membership cards which I'll give out either at the next couple of events, or by post a little later (this is being sent out by Maria and I can't send the cards up the wires to her in time). The membership cards this year are to be photo id cards, so passport type photos will be required (or photocopies thereof). If you have access to a scanner and can get the image into a black and white 150x200 JPG format what will do very nicely. There will be a couple of people at shows willing to take these pictures for you.

If any of you are able to start fires authentically then I would very much like to hear from you. We have been doing quite a few experiments with different materials trying to find out which steels spark properly, what type of flint works best and which tinders to use, so any help would be very much appreciated with either this or any other methods you have/know about.

Hope to see you all soon

Cormac

## Orgreave Filming Information

### The Battle of Orgreave, June 16/17 2001.

Notes for re-enactors interested in participating

#### 1. Introduction

EventPlan Limited has been commissioned to organise key aspects of an unusual large-scale re-enactment, on behalf of major arts production company The Artangel Trust and Channel 4. This includes recruitment of re-enactors, scripting and direction of the event, along with liaison with the film crew. Howard Giles is Event Director. This event offers the chance to enjoy a weekend taking part in something new, whilst being well-paid as extras.

#### 2. Historical background

On Sunday 18 June 1984 over 4000 police, many in full riot gear, clashed with a similar numbers of NUM miners who were attempting to picket the Orgreave Coke plant during the miners' strike. It was the watershed of the dispute and the last large-scale clash. For the Government it was an opportunity to serve notice on the miners that secondary picketing would not be tolerated (although at this time still legal), whilst the miners sought to advance their case against pit closure by hindering access of heavy lorries to and from the coke plant.

Although the picketing was initially peaceful, new anti-riot tactics (very reminiscent of those used by the Roman army including charges on horseback) were used to disperse the largely unorganised (and latterly, outnumbered) pickets via set-piece advances by the police line, followed by a vigorous (or heavy-handed, depending on your viewpoint) pursuit.

#### 3. The re-enactment

Although but a few years ago, as we move into a new century the miners' strike and the Thatcher/Scargill era already seems a distant part of history. To mark the 17th anniversary therefore, a carefully planned and, crucially, non-political live re-enactment is planned. This will be a realistic recreation, part live art, part historical re-enactment, part local community event and, significantly, a documentary filmed by Channel 4.

The re-enactment will be in two parts, the first either held on ground next the original location of the old coke plant (now replaced by an open cast mine) or if not available, a local field. The second part will be on the actual route of the police pursuit over a railway bridge and through part of the (largely unchanged) village of Orgreave, near Sheffield, South Yorkshire. The event will be on Sunday 17 June, with training/rehearsals the day before.

#### 4. Recruitment and organisation of re-enactors

Several hundred safe, responsible, disciplined re-enactors are required to act in this recreation, alongside stunt men, a mounted element and real miners/ ex-miners/ possibly some serving and ex-police, (playing both themselves and police officers). We welcome serious applications from societies, sub-units of the latter and individuals.

Both sides will be subject to a unified control to ensure the re-enactment flows according to the script. On both sides, key re-enactment officers will be invited to lead groups, backed by NCOs, usually all formed from their society members (although smaller groups will be brigaded). Those selected will play an important role in the training/rehearsals on the Saturday. We also require a small number of senior officers experienced in the tactical command of brigades or armies.

Societies/units might need to "split" as a) some members may not be the right height or build to play policemen and b) to ensure friends "fight" friends if possible.

An enthusiastic response has already been received from groups, so participation by successful applicants will inevitably be primarily on a first come, first served basis.

#### 6. Who may apply?

Please note that only experienced re-enactors are requested to apply, with those playing the role of police being used to moving in disciplined formed units. Preference will be given to re-enactors belonging to units taking part rather than individual applicants. To maximise the accuracy of our event & film we are particularly keen to recruit re-enactors who were present at Orgreave in 1984, or involved elsewhere.

We regret that only male re-enactors are invited. This is because a) no female police officers and very few female demonstrators were present in 1984 and b) the re-enactment is being filmed, the content of which is required to be as accurate as possible.

#### 7. Stewards

We require a small number of stewards (who would be paid the same as participants). Both male and female re-enactors are welcome to apply for these jobs.

#### 8. Conditions of participation

These are by necessity strict and only those willing to meet our criteria need apply. We require a professional attitude and a willingness to stick to the agreed script. Although staging a live re-enactment with an audience, participants should think of this as primarily a film contract, with all this entails. Participation will require respecting the command structure and following instructions, conforming to a dress and appearance code, plus the signing of a contract/ film release form. Public liability insurance will be arranged by Channel 4.

All participants will be required to be present on both Saturday and Sunday. Our preferred arrival for all is by 10pm Friday evening and certainly by 11am Saturday.

All participants must agree to act in a responsible manner to uphold the highest standards of health and safety towards themselves and others throughout the weekend from arrival to departure. All are required to be "dry" - ie absolutely no consumption of alcohol on Saturday until after the end of rehearsals and on Sunday until after the event (about 4pm). Anti-social behaviour will not be tolerated at any time and regarded as breach of contract.

## 9. The Battle

Prior to the battle there will be a "show and tell" display of uniforms, tactics, etc. The battle itself will be in two quite short parts. The first will recreate the initial confrontations in front of the old coke plant, whilst the second (after an interval to re-organise participants and move the audience) will consist of the police pursuit of miners through part of the village. At the end there will be a joint parade of the "miners" and "police", to reinforce the fact it was only a re-enactment, with friends playing roles on opposing sides, rather than a real fight. This will give the opportunity for re-enactors to greet and/or applaud their fellow participants rather like at multi-period events. The actual action will consist of a couple of brief mass "pushes" by miners against the police line, set-piece advances/attacks by the latter, some (fake) rock-throwing at them, lots of shouting, some hand to hand fighting etc. The miners, without the benefit of disciplined formations, armour & weaponry, will retreat & evade arrest when the police attack in force, especially at the ends of each of the two separate parts of the battle.

The script will be tight with no opportunities for inaccurate or inappropriate behaviour, with hand to hand "fighting" limited and strictly controlled (so participants must accept that they might not get an opportunity for this). Everyone that does will however be expected to "pull their blows". Only safety weaponry (eg fake stones and batons) will be used. Stuntmen will act out the more violent incidents. In short, everyone must remember that although it has to look convincing, it's not a real "battle".

## 10. Rates of pay, food & camping

£80 per day for the two days (Sat/Sun) for participants and stewards, with a small additional sum for key unit commanders, payable at the end of the event.

Main meals will be provided (NB: we regret that we cannot cater for accompanying partners/families). Campsite available. A beer tent with Saturday evening band is planned.

## 11. Dress and appearance code

### The Police

Those wishing to play the role of policemen will need to be 5'7" or over, have short hair and be sufficiently fit-looking ie no obviously short or overweight individuals, sorry. Neatly trimmed beards are okay. Modern glasses are acceptable as long as they look the part ie no fancy post 1980s frames/ sunglasses. Police uniform and equipment would be provided although participants' own polished black footwear - preferably police or army-style boots - must be brought along.

### The Miners

Height/ build is not as important although very overweight individuals would not be appropriate, sorry. Long hair/ moustaches are fine, albeit avoiding anachronistic modern styles. Side burns are encouraged. You will need to supply your own clothing. On 18 June 1984 it was very hot with few wearing much more than a T-shirt and jeans (many being bare-chested). Clothing such as a plain shirt or T-shirt, jeans etc is ideal, and as we cannot be sure the weather will be the same this time, a jacket. All clothing must look the part, ie nothing obviously post - 1980s. T-shirts with slogans should be avoided unless correct for the era, and no obviously modern-looking glasses or trainers please. We plan to reproduce some NUM stickers etc to wear.

## 12. Participants' families/ spouses

Subject to advance application, a limited number of tickets to view the re-enactment/ camp with participants will be available to immediate family (only). If you have any queries, please initially contact your CO/ co-ordinator who has a more detailed version of these notes.

### And finally...

The Penwortham Green Fair (originally scheduled for 22nd April) has unfortunately had to be postponed due to the foot and mouth outbreak. A new date should be decided in the next week or so, and as soon as it's confirmed I'll let you all know. At least if it's later in the year the weather should be better. Thanks to everyone who has expressed an interest in coming.