

To the Men & Women of the Raven, Greetings.

Hello Everyone,

Morden Park.

As I write, it is Tuesday morning after the Morden show and I am completely knackered. Three performances a day for three days, by the last fight I could barely lift my shield! When Mo, Steve and I first arrived it appeared that we were at the set for "Stalagluftte 13", in previous years the re-enactors hired for this event had been blamed for stealing from the traders and we were fenced off from them. Security guards with dogs prevented us from escaping.

After this poor start thing did improve, the Konungr explained the facts of life to the show organisers and our own behaviour showed that we were not as unreliable as other re-enactors. The weather was generally ok, the only serious rain was from midnight Sunday until mid morning Monday when it turned into a nice bright day. Manaraefan was deployed on the left flank of the Saxon army next to the audience, we had to show fight every day which made the work even harder. The Manaraefan warriors and those attached to us did a grand job.

As I was leading the unit I also had to go out for the parleys and shout at Black Bob, sometimes all I could do was breath heavily at him. With the audience only on one side we could get close to them and do a little audience participation. It was hard to get them to cheer for either Edmund Ironside or Cnut on the first two days, but the Monday audience, as well as being bigger responded better.

We were heavily involved with the Kiddie Vike as usual, me on the PA, Steve beating the kids into some sort of order and the rest facing the awful charge of the screaming kids. The villagers and marshals had to come to our rescue on Monday, when we had so many children taking part that the warriors had to face four separate groups of kids. Sandra, Sara and others had to keep the waiting kids in line and then help to arm them quickly, from where I was standing it didn't look like an easy task.

The LHE was busy, especially on Monday, most kids seemed to think that we were trying to sell our helmets! Constant vigilance was required to prevent theft, even so Simone had some of her beads stolen by a pint sized snatch and run artist on Sunday.

Mo and Maria did a fine job as Manaraefan standard bearers and Mo and Simon made valiant efforts to die near my corpse! I think I would have preferred them to sacrifice themselves to keep me alive! At the end of the weekend the honours were even between the two sides in the free fights so everyone went home happy. The only combat problem we had was that anyone who turned up late joined the Viking side (well we are The Vikings), this meant that every time we went on the field for the Saxons we were outnumbered, quite heavily at times. On Sunday some Vikings had to defect to our side to prevent us from being crushed at the start. Most of our warriors

wore mail so we made a good visual impression, at least it made sense when we ignored some hits!

Overall it was a fun event, there were three short processions each day, they were not hard, just inconvenient. Provided that the organisers treat us better I would go again.

Forthcoming Events:

18/19 May Llangollen Multi Period Event - Cwmwd Ial Show - See Map

This is a multi period event organised by Ian Grant of Cwmwd Ial and sounds like it will be a lot of fun, I'd love to go but have to work. If you do go remember to register and let me know when you get back so that I can double check with Sandra. If you go and want to write a report for the Raven's Wing please send it directly to Maria.

26 May Training and Barbecue at Emmalyne's - See Map

Originally billed as foot training for the cavalry this seems to be expanding into a house warming as well. Those that have not yet faced mounted cavalry may get the chance here. I hope there is a map, if not her address is on the new contact sheet.

1 June Yeovil Multi Period Event - Manaraefan Show

Rob Butler who is organising the Yeovil show says he will have the maps etc. to me after 20 June! As soon as I have them I will send them on to you. We have to provide our own arena and Rob has asked if we minded if anyone else used it, I said they could. We have two arena slots 11:30 to 12:00 for single combats and 15:00 to 15:30 for a skirmish. At the moment it doesn't look like I'll make it, if I can't Steve will be in charge of the arena events and liaison with Rob Butler.

14 June Rookwood School

Please contact me directly if you are going and I will provide directions etc. This is a regular date and has been a fun day for all those attending. After capturing the children we force them to build our camp, we light a fire to cook lunch and then lead raiding party to find food.

21 June Dunbury First School Fete

Dunbury First School is in the Village of Winterborne Whitechurch on the A354 between Blandford Forum and Dorchester. The village is little more than the houses either side of the A354. There is a small village green and church (on the left from Dorchester, on the right from Blandford Forum), the school is close to the church, follow the signs for the fete. We must be ready by 17:30 and will run until 20:30. We need a small camp and a number of warriors to entertain the kids and their parents. We will do some single combats, a small skirmish, Hrothgar's Story (maybe with help from some of the kids), kidnap and hold to ransom the head teacher, and generally behave like loud and obnoxious Vikings.

21 June Basing House Schools Day - See Map and Armada Militia letter.

22/23 June Basing House - See Map and Armada Militia letter.

The Armada Militia

Basing House 21-23 June

The site will be open from Lunchtime on Thursday 20th of June. Please enter the site via the gate in the British Legion car park (see map) and find a member of Armada Militia, who will then direct you from there.

There is space for both authentic and "modern camping" although it might be necessary for people wishing to camp authentically to carry some of their equipment as vehicle access to parts of the site is restricted.

Friday

There will be a short briefing at about 8.45am on Friday morning for those people involved in the schools day; we currently have approximately 400 children booked to attend during the day. The first group is booked for 9.30am although they might appear earlier depending on their transport! It is our intention to provide some food at lunchtime for all of the participants and we are hoping to do some sort of vegetable soup at the end of the day. It is hoped that the schoolchildren should be clear of the site by about 3.30pm and although the site is technically open to the public until 6pm we are off duty as soon as the children have left

Saturday and Sunday

Basing House is a civilised venue and consequently not open to the public in the morning. Therefore the weekend event will take place between 2pm to 6pm. The format will be relaxed living history in your campsite and possibly a short arena display (we will sort this out on the weekend).

It is possible to have fires but they must be raised off the ground and on metal plates, you will also need to bring some of your own firewood although there was some on site last time I was there. Also please be aware it is an archaeological site when using very large tent pegs.

You can now ignore the warning on the map about the local pub being re-enactor unfriendly as it has just changed landlords and there appears to be a new policy on this.

Finally the immediate locals are somewhat unfriendly and the curator would appreciate it if we could keep the noise at a reasonable level in the evenings so as to minimise the complaints from the neighbours.

Helmets; Fittings & Decoration

Following a recent authenticity incident where Roger, Mo & I (Dave) were pulled up on our helm fittings; I have done a little digging, and herein paraphrase the main points of the specific gear guide on the subject so we don't get caught again!

I have confined my comments to domed and conical helms as nobody within Manaraefan as far as I am aware uses a chimney helm. If anyone wishes more information on the subject, I have a copy of the specific gear guide available. It is very detailed, and is worth a look before embarking on any work in this area.

Generally speaking, both types of helmet may have a nasal, which is either part of the main body, or, is fitted as a separate item. It is thought that conical helms are more likely to have a "built-in" nasal than those of domed construction. If the nasal is a separate fitting then it may also incorporate eyebrows.

Another possibility is the spectacle guard, but again, this is thought to be more common to the domed rather than the conical helm. This does not however preclude the use of spectacles on a conical helm.

Now the important bit; no evidence exists for decoration to be applied directly to the body of the helm, or for the use of bronze or pewter cast fittings.

Helmet fittings are made of iron, and it is to these fittings that any artwork is applied. This may take the form of precious metal foils or plates bonded to the surface, or in some cases inlaid wire, chased and contrasted with black niello. The decoration ranges from simple lines, to complex knot work and religious symbols.

Helmets may also be fitted with a ring mail aventail or rigid strip to provide neck protection.

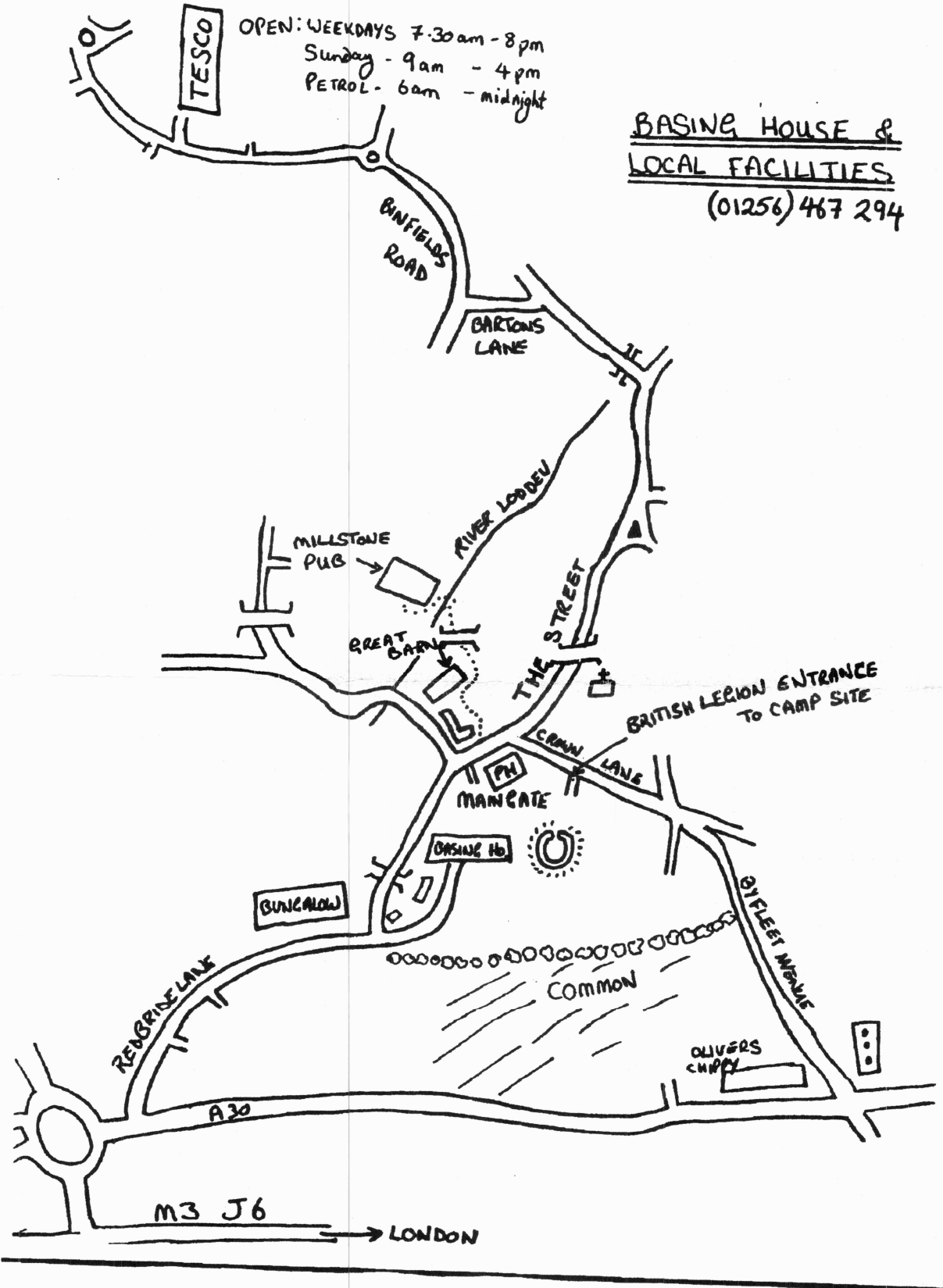
I'm not suggesting that anyone needs to panic right now, but if you are thinking of a new lid or refurbishing the one you have, please take heed.

Dave Hall

TESCO

OPEN: WEEKDAYS 7.30 am - 8 pm
Sunday - 9 am - 4 pm
PETROL - 6 am - midnight

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BIFLET LANE

COMMON

OLIVERS CHIPPY

A30

M3 J6

LONDON

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THE MAIN GATES
OF THE SHOWGROUND
* YOU WILL BE
DIRECTED
FROM HERE
- (WELL, ALL
THE BEST
INTENTIONS
ETC ETC...!
*

ACCESS TO CAMPSITE OFF
THE A542. PROCEED UP THE
'B' ROAD LANE, AND TURN
RIGHT INTO THE CRICKET/RUGBY
GROUND. (PARK CARS EITHER ON
THE CAMPSITE OR AT THE
SHOWGROUND),

* PLEASE REGISTER AT THE
BELL TENT *

