



# The Newsletter

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Published on behalf of the shire of Falcon's Keep and  
student members of Falcon's Gate

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## **Cover Story:**

“The first stav, bette, and the stavoyre, the joint between the stav and bette, June 17.”

From the upcoming pictorial [Chronology of the Viking Hall Construction and Raising](#). Used with kind permission of Owen Christiansen.

### Disclaimer:

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Submissions are accepted until the 20th of the previous month, preferably as a Word document inserted into an email. Send to both the Chronicler and Deputy Chronicler. Submissions are the property of the contributor and may not be used without permission of the author or artist. Contact the Chronicler for further information.

The Mewsletter is published monthly. It is available from Bart Forman, 620 N Ash Ave, Marshfield, WI 54449. This publication will be available on the Falcon's Keep webpage at [www.falconskeep.org](http://www.falconskeep.org). If you require a paper copy, please contact the Chronicler. If you wish to make a contribution to defray mailing costs, please give it to the Exchequer of Falcon's Keep.



## The Chronicler's Quill

Saludos hasta el folk de la Comarca  
de la Falcon's Keep !

It was an interesting experience to be inside a period building in the winter. That's one of the things I like about the SCA— experiencing everyday life as it may have been in the past. In fact, I liked it so much I wanted more information about it. It will be in three parts. Part one deals the history behind the building and the planning. Part two will follow the actual construction. Part three will be a pictorial of the construction. Many thanks to Baron Guttorm for taking the time to share this.

In other (mundane) news...

As some of you know, Emelye will be undergoing surgery in the end of March. Unfortunately, this is less than a week before Haire Affaire. For right now, she plans to attend; but she will be unable to be Troll. I will echo the request for someone to step up and fill in for her. It will be most appreciated.

Finally, please note the change of venue for the February moot. A family event has been planned for that same day, so Emelye and I will be unable to host the event.

**Atentamente en el Servicio,**  
**Pedro de Benavides**

# January 8 Moot

(as compiled by Pedro de Benavides)

## Officer Reports

**Chatelaine:** Evercon in one week (January 14) Marie regrets being unable to attend due to mundane matters. Time for the demo : 10 am to 2 pm. Marie requests gentles to attend/assist.

**Chronicler:** Requests for everyone to sign release forms, as printed in December Mewsletter. Also, any interested should sign up for the Mewsletter that currently do not get it.

**Arts and Sciences:** Expressed approval of the longhouse. Inquired about classes for Haire Affaire.

**Exchequer:** \$10700.15 current balance. \$50.00 for ad in Northwatch paid. Fee for website will be due shortly.

**Falcon's Gate:** Practice at the university will most likely resume in the second week of February.

**Haire Affaire:** Insurance payment submitted.

There are tentative plans for a "Valhalla" tournament, and the return of last year's popular "rock throwing" tournament. Mistress Ealasaid presented a menu for feast at Haire Affaire. (Note: the menu will be included in a future Mewsletter.) She also provided some breads that may be used at feast.

**Future Moots:** The upcoming moots for February and March were confirmed; the April moot would be held on the 29th of that month. Location was not confirmed at this time.

**Boorman's Pennsic Planning:** After some discussion, it was decided that the 2nd weekend in August would be the first choice to hold the event. Much of the discussion about scheduling was based on the movement of Pennsic schedule.

Also, there was a discussion regarding the site itself; while it was most likely that the site would be at the Lions' in Wisconsin Rapids, the possibility was suggested to move back to the "traditional" site at North Wood County Park. Other site possibilities were also brought up.

**Miscellaneous:** Gallus brought deer leather for anyone to use if they wished to. More may be available from him if you inquire.

**Updates to Minutes:**

**Falcon's Gate:** Practice has resumed at the UWSP campus. It is inside the HEC; but in a different space. Park in the normal location and walk to the front of the building. Go in the second set of doors on the ground floor. As you walk in, the pool will be on your left. Go past that and the hallway on your left, it will be the first set of doors on the left.

**Haire Affaire:** Lady Emelye Ambroys will be undergoing surgery on the Monday before Haire Affaire. Because of this, she will no longer be able to be Troll for the event. If anyone wishes to volunteer to fill in for lady Emelye, please contact Lord Alessandro.

**Falcon's Gate and Fighter Practice:**

Fighter Practice: HEC 154

Monday evening 7:00 PM

(HEC: Health Enhancement Center)

Falcon's Gate: DUC 211

Thursday evenings 7:00 PM

(DUC: Dreyfus University Center Building)

Please check the Falcon's Gate or Falcon's Keep group pages or the Yahoo group page for changes.



## Event Calendar

### February, 2012

#### Lupercalia

Saturday February 18, 2012

Shire of Rivenwood Tower (Nicollet MN)

#### Fighter School XVII

Saturday February 25, 2012

Barony of Windhaven (Kewaunee WI)

### March, 2012

#### Fighting in the Shade II

Saturday March 3, 2012

Barony of Jararvellir (Madison WI)

#### Gulf Wars XXI

Sunday March 11-18, 2012

Kingdom of Gleann Abhann (Lumberton MS)

#### That Moot Thingy XII Friday March 16-18, 2012

Canton of Coille Stoirmeil (Wilton WI)

#### Bardic Madness XXII Saturday March 24, 2012

Shire of Rokeclif (La Crosse WI)

#### Haire Affaire: Omens and Portents and Signs, Oh My!

Saturday March 31, 2012

Shire of Falcon's Keep (Wausau WI)

### April, 2012

#### Northshield Spring Coronation

Saturday April 14, 2012

Shire of Vilku Urvas (Grand Rapids MN)

#### THACO 3

Saturday April 21, 2012

Barony of Nordskogen (St. Paul MN)

#### Western Regional Melee Practice

Saturday April 28, 2012

Shire of Dreibrucken (Bismarck ND)

### May, 2012

#### Northshield Spring Crown Tourney Saturday May 12, 2012 as XLVII

(47) Barony of Castel Rouge (Ile des Chênes MB)

#### Burn, Baby, Burn! Pyre of Fire! Friday May 18-20, 2012 as XLVII (47)

Shire of Shattered Oak (Haugen WI)

#### Lamb to Loom Saturday May 19, 2012 as XLVII (47)

Shire of Turm an dem See (Random Lake WI)

## The Grindbygningen: A conversation

*In January, Falcon's Keep held their monthly Moot in a Grindbygningen that had been planned by Baron Guttorm and erected with the help of several members of Falcon's Keep. It was a unique experience to be able to be in a period building in winter— at least, unique to the editor.*

*Baron Guttorm has graciously allowed the editor to share some information regarding its historical origins, as well as his story of how the building was planned and assembled.*

### Part 1: What it is

**Q: What is name of the type of building that you have built, and what materials would have been used in period?**

A: This particular style of building using this Norwegian timberframing technique is called “Grindbygningen”, which translates to 'The Grind Building.' It is really neat in that the weight of the building actually locks the joints together. No nails are used in the timbers, and pegs are only there for alignment during construction, so it is a very sophisticated style of timberframing.

Longhouses go back to the dark ages, and encompass several different styles of building, using different materials depending what was available locally. Roofs could have been one or a combination of materials: thatch; wood planks; wood shingles; sod, and- later by the 12th century- slate. Stone may have been used earlier, but there is no reliable reference other than some statements in Norwegian historical architecture books.

Walls also could have been thatch; wattle and daub ("weave a good wall"); solid wood; wood planks; stone, and sod. In Iceland, Greenland and in the New World (Vinland or present day L'Anse aux Meadows), the longhouses tended to use sod because wood was scarce. Wattle and daub walls were used in earlier times and slightly south like Denmark and Sweden where the climate was milder. In Norway solid wood walls and wood planks were used in the Viking period.

**Q: How big could these buildings be?**

A: Basically, houses from the dark ages to the migration period to Viking times were restricted in width but not necessarily in length. Some longhouses were reported to be as much as several hundred feet in length. The width is limited because the length of available lumber from local trees. This limits the length of cross ties: white pine in Norway, in particular, is limited to about a 24' by 28' residence hall.

## The Grindbygningen: A conversation

### Q: How big could these buildings be ? (continued)

In the context of “Grind” buildings , the width is as long as the cross tie, called a ‘bette’. However, I have seen articles where the longhouse is defined as a building with multiple uses, for example, a “hall” and a “byre” or barn. In the dark ages to the Viking age, multiple use buildings were common. By the end of the Viking age, however, the byre began to be considered a separate building from the residence hall. This may also have reflected a change in technology where residences began to be log homes, and outbuildings continued to be Grind buildings.

### Q: Are there other terms used to describe the Viking longhouse, and how does this relate to your building?

A: There are slightly different uses of the term longhouse. In Norway, for example, there are several different terms for longhouses, including “hall” and “sal”. The hall was a place to gather and transact business. It was build to promote the prestige of the local chief, and cement alliances. The sal tended to be a hall for royalty. The term ‘Grindbygningen’ would then actually refer to an architectural style, whereas terms like ‘longhouse’ and ‘hall’ would describe how the building was used: gatherings, gift giving, and political alliances. In England, these timber frame buildings were known as mead halls, and were used much as the Viking halls. I am still working on a better definition of the Viking longhouse and hall.

### Q: What was the background of your interest in this type of building?

A:As a young adult I helped my father build houses. I started helping to build houses in 9th grade, and worked summers through my college days, a total of over 8 years. We would build maybe 3 houses from start to finish from June to August; so in total I've helped build between 2 and 3 dozen houses. I was always interested in building historical buildings. When Elspeth and I traveled to Norway, Scotland, the Orkneys, and Iceland, we would always go to see reconstructed historical and Viking age buildings, and joke about building our own. When we bought the lots our house stands on, we would joke that we were going to build a Viking longhouse on the adjacent lot.

## The Grindbygningen: A conversation

**Q: What then transpired to make this lifelong interest into a physical reality?**

A: In 2007 I took a class at Vesterheim taught by Kare Herfindal from Voss Norway, who wrote the book on Grindbygninger (the plural of Grindbygningen). Kare has spent maybe 40 to 50 years saving old Grind buildings, relocating and rebuilding them, and building new Grind buildings, as well as teaching classes on how to build them. When the US experienced a new interest in timber framing in the 1980's, there was renewed interest in this style of building in Norway as well: both to save old buildings and to build new buildings. In the class led by Kare, we built a 10' by 18' building. It was at that point that I began to design my own Viking style longhouse. First, I built a small, portable building so that I would have a real building with the joints in hand. Then, when I visited my son Knut in Svalbard, we saw the reconstruction of a longhouse at Stiklestad which inspired me. Later, we visited L'Anse aux Meadows and NorStead (a nearby site in Newfoundland); we also visited two reconstructions of Leif Erickson's church he built for his mother in Greenland. These reconstructions were the same size as the building we were considering, so they stood as proof that it was possible to build such a hall. We had been thinking and planning a Viking longhouse ever since Kare's class, but it was at that point that we seriously began designing and ordering materials.

**Q: How did you go about the planning of the building?**

A: To build an actual Grindbygningen involves a great many details, some of which no one else has faced in this modern age: each longhouse is different in such things as size and materials.

We began seriously to work on the longhouse in June of 2010. First I made a detailed design, then built a scale model, and then began ordering materials. Sources of material were identified that fall, and ordered in the winter of 2010-2011. The posts were delivered June 2011, and construction began, with the posts and beams raised July 30 and 31, 2011.

*Part 2 will be in next month's Mewsletter. It will cover the joys (and tribulations) of the building of the Grindbygningen.*

**February Moot**  
**Sunday, February 19 , 2011**  
At the abode of Lady Marie Dudley  
1505 S. Locust Ave. Apt. #2 Marshfield, WI  
**1:00 PM**

From the North: Enter Marshfield by Hwy 13 or Hwy 97. Follow Central Avenue south to 14th street, at a set of stoplights. There is a gas station (The Store) on your right. Make a right at that corner. You will see another set of stoplights; take the first left after the stoplights onto South Locust Avenue. There will be banners to direct you to the right building.

From the South: If you enter Marshfield via the "Boulevard" (Veterans Parkway), follow the directions above after turning left onto Central Avenue. Otherwise, enter Marshfield by Hwy 13, which will become Central Avenue. At the 14th street stoplights, you will see the gas station "kitty corner" on the left. Turn left. You will see another set of stoplights; take the first left after the stoplights onto South Locust Avenue. There will be banners to direct you to the right building.

**Web pages of interest:**

[www.sca.org](http://www.sca.org)

[www.northshield.org](http://www.northshield.org)

[www.falconskeep.org](http://www.falconskeep.org)

[www.uwsp.edu/stuorg/falcon/index.htm](http://www.uwsp.edu/stuorg/falcon/index.htm)

[www.medievalhorseandclothing.com](http://www.medievalhorseandclothing.com)

**Facebook Groups:**

Shire of Falcon's Keep

Falcon's Gate at UWSP

Falcon's Keep Rapier Fighters

**Don't forget to check out our Yahoo group:**

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/falconskeep/>

## *Officers of Falcon's Keep*

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Marshall of Archery: vacant

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