

Abbey Medieval Banquet 5th July and Tourney 13th July

Banquet: Sir Dylan and I again joined many others from Brisbane and even one couple from Townsville at the College of St Michaels, for the annual Abbey Museum Medieval Banquet. Abbey Museum this year were celebrating their 25th anniversary and it was a night to behold.

We were dressed up in medieval type garb and there was even one guest to rival Carol with a dragon onesie! Although it looked more like a white cow with ridge fins.

Tickets go on sale in February and you need to get in quick in order to get a seat. This year they offered “premium seats” for an extra \$20. Premium being you have a cushion on the hard bench seat to place your derriere. After the previous year, I thought the “luxury” cushion was well worth the expense... and I was right too.

Dinner is three courses or “removes” as it is referred to. After Sir Blair instructed the guests in proper table manners for the period, the first dish consisting of Poached Chicken and Leek Broth of the first remove was served, followed by the eight other dishes of the first remove. We had slow cooked lamb shanks, confit of duck, venison pies, candied carrots and parsnips, green beans, salad and sweet apple and rosewater tarts.

During the first remove, we were also entertained by the Shuvani Romani Kumpania who demonstrated Gypsy dances and costumes. Beware your silver and your husbands ladies. They even enticed guests to get up to dance around the hall. We were also entertained by local medieval bands and were amazed by a pair of jugglers. In between the first and second removes, we were entertained by the company of the phoenix. Ladies dancing with fire rings, gloves and swallowing fire. Many of the men were captivated by the beauties dressed in quite provocative attire.

Second remove was then served after the ceremony of presenting of whole roasted pork to the high table. This remove consisted of roast pork, roast beef, buttered cauliflower and Fig and walnut cakes. I should also mention there was this delicious serving of mulled wine, although by this stage, I think the bar was unaware of its popularity and was starting to run out. More entertainment was had with medieval dancing lessons and the presentation of the Issue (desert). It was a cake in the shape of a very interesting deer. Finally the last dish of the evening was served – cheese and cake platters. As if we had not had enough food already!!

The Tournament:

Sir Dylan and I again donned our medieval garb – although Sir Dylan would more refer to it as medieval fantasy type garb. During the week before, I sought out a practicing druid and presented Sir Dylan with a rune encrusted staff with a 6 point antler top.

Upon arriving, we had to register the staff at the “weapons” tent due to its pointy nature. While we were lined up, some guy dressed as a ninja with plastic throwing stars and a foam sword also had to register his “weapons”.

We also ran into Graham Clark and Debbie Harry a number of times, with Graham waiting for the day to warm up to see the buxom ladies take off their cloaks. We wandered around the stalls for a little while before joining the queue to the first Joust at 10:30.

This year, one of the new people was only 17 years of age and up against the reigning champion from the USA, Sire Dale Walter. My favourite (and only because I like the horse flesh she was sitting on – a beautiful black Friesian mare) was the Lady Sarah Hay. We also welcomed new comers from Calgary and our regular visitors from New Zealand.

The jousting tournament is entertaining each year and draws in a great crowd and just as long a queue to enter. There were some great passes with my favourite this year leaving round one with 8 points. A break of the lance (one break) constitutes one point or a shatter (break in 2 or more places) is two points.

Following the joust, we wandered over to the castle area where we found our seats for Historia Germanica, Cotteraux – Siege of the castle and Birds of Prey. Historia Germanica heralds some small but loud cannon fire. On the first round, I nearly dropped my camera again this year. So pleased, I even managed to get two shots of the fire from the front of the cannon!!

The siege of the castle, showed some pretty impressive shots of the workings of a trebuchet. There was one group with excellent accuracy, while the other group was a little off, trying to hit their own men scaling the walls of the castle.

From here we were off to the food and wine traders. Four bottles of spiced merriment securely purchased and our stomachs full of rich roast beef and gravy rolls, we decided it was time to enter our motorised horse and cart and drive home.

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