

La Sociedad de la Entrada

After Action Report for Oñate Event 9/22-23/12

Event

The event was the Santa Fe Renaissance Fair at El Rancho de las Golondrinas Living History Museum (<http://www.golondrinas.org/>). As previously, our premise was to serve the weekend as guards for El Rey Ferdinand and La Reina Ysabel. A pavilion was set up in the main Plaza with colorful banners and two thrones. We set up our Encampamento Espagnol (Spanish encampment) on the lawn behind the Plaza for our base of operations. That way we could easily coordinate with Their Majesties. We were able to share our corner of Baca Plaza with the resident goats and sheep. The weather was a little milder than usual which was very welcome indeed. According to our tradition, we were not listed as a participant group.

Encampamento Espagnol

Dave Poulin and Vic Kubica arrived Friday night to set up tents behind the Baca Placita next to the goat pen. We spent the night at the camp.



The Spanish Camp.

Saturday

We mustered Ron Sanders (briefly), Dave Poulin, Vic Kubica, Tony Campisi, Bennett Poulin, Stevie Sanchez, Kathy Palmer, Blaine Bachman, Austin Dimick, Tim Willson, and Mike Vigil on Saturday. Tim set up his armorer shop (armero) as a display of armor. Ron, Dave, and Kathy played some F&D Renaissance tunes. After Ron left (he had another gig) Bennett played drum with us. Austin and Vic helped visitors try on bits of armor.



Austin (above) attends to questions while Vic (below) helps a visitor try on some armor



Pike Drill

We conducted pike drill in the afternoon.



Preparing for pike drill L-R: Dave, Austin, Tony, Vic, Blaine, and Bennett. Between times we rested in the shade (Blaine and Kathy below).



Royal Escort

In the afternoon we escorted the Royal Couple down to the jousting event. This year it was big hit. Tim, Dave, and Mike Vigil stayed behind to watch the camp and armory. We heard from Mike King that four thousand people had attended this day.



Escorting the Royal Couple (Sunday)

Sunday

Sunday we mustered Dwight Thompson and family, Mirtha, Indiana and Libertad; Dave Poulin, Vic Kubica, Tony Campisi, Bennett Poulin, Stevie Sanchez, Kathy Palmer, Blaine Bachman, Austin Dimick, Tim Willson, and Mike Vigil.

Pike Drill

We formed up for pike drill again.



L-R: Mike, Austin, Bennett, Vic, Tim, Blaine, Dave, and Tony.



Falconry

We Escorted La Reina to the Falconry event which was very impressive. She got to receive a falcon on her hand. Then a young hawk was let loose to soar over our heads. It was supposed to catch a leather bag from the Falconer's hand but it got distracted a while by another hawk. Finally the Falconer dismissed us saying he had a hawk to catch.



The entire Group: L-R: Mike Vigil, Kathy Palmer, Dwight Thompson and family Mirtha, Indiana, and Libertad, Stephanie Sanchez (in front), Austin Dimick, Tony Campisi, Vic Kubica, Bennett and Dave Poulin.



A surprise visit from Dave's daughter-in-law Gail and kids Lillie and James. We also had a visit from Porter's family Chas and kids (apparently Porter was 'hitting the books').

Conclusion

The Renaissance Fair was a great success for the museum. Visitation for the weekend was over 8,000 people, an increase from 6,200 last year. All photos by Dave.

Dave

Additional comments by Tim Willson:

During the Ren Fair weekend, I set up a display of 7 helmets, an antique chain mail shirt, modern mail made by me and my suit of armor. This was next to the tortilla making area near the tienda. Camped behind the wall near the hornos were the Sociedad de la Entrada, with three tents. They also had many historic Spanish military items, a padded cuera, shields and swords. The Sociedad also had musicians on fife and drum playing historic marching music.

All of our items were historically accurate as possible for reproduction items. Our location at the rear of the Baca placita was one of minimal traffic, which was a blessing in that we were not overwhelmed, and a curse in that we often had no visitors at all. Tony Campisi and Dave Poulin of the Sociedad were excellent. Always at the ready and well organized, in addition to being friendly, knowledgeable, and calm. From time to time, Tony would demonstrate the firing of his Spanish Arquebus. This was quite popular. The method of interaction of the Sociedad is right in keeping with the methods taught in the Golondrinas training class. They are not in first person, they judge the level of interest, and the ages of the visitors quite well. They are always attentive, polite and stay on topic.

The Sociedad would have a pike drill training in the early A.M., enabling us to be ready to march and do pike moves. The group of around six marchers plus musicians would accompany the Royal court to the Joust or the Raptors event, making a most impressive procession. In contrast to the Royal Court and the SCA, which have an atmosphere of fantasy, the Sociedad had the ring

of truth, as we were portraying history rather than entertaining, or playing at history. As Las Golondrinas is a living history museum, I think it is good that at least a small part of the Ren Fair experience is portraying real history.

Another popular feature developed as we went along. This was allowing children to put on the helmets and even the full armor. With two members of the Sociedad we could get the full armor on a visitor in less than ten minutes. This was a big treat for many. Hilarity ensued. Many photos were taken. I do not know of any other museum where this is an option. People were trying to pay me \$10 for the privilege. I refused saying the museum would not allow me to take money, as I was a docent.

For those re-inactors who were already making their own chain mail, I offered instruction in the next step to authenticity, making RIVETED chain mail. I had my tools and materials, as well as examples of the more authentic mail. (European mail of the period was not butted, as is often seen in re-inactors mail) Each day there were some who were most enthusiastic about learning this skill.

Packing up to go at the end of the event was a bit problematic, as some had to be gone before closing time, and our stuff is heavy, we had to make many walks to the parking lot.

I do not know if the Sociedad is being re-imbursed for their participation. But certainly, most being from Albuquerque, travel costs are significant. I believe that other museums will give them a stipend of from \$200-\$400 for an event. This is paid to the leader who redistributes the funds.

It seems that attending the court at 11 and 3 for marches, is a good plan. The foot traffic after 3 is quite small. It is also small at 10 to 11, making that the perfect time to drill pikes and marching.

I think we are very fortunate to have such a group in our area. They add a lot to our events.
Tim Willson



Packing up to go home. What a time to get a flat tire! Many thanks to Tony and Bennett for their assistance and also for all the people who helped pack up the gear! Dave

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