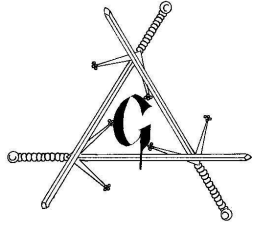


Gallowglass Academy, Inc.

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Whether you consider it the beginning of a new decade of twenty-teens, or the final year of the twenty-noughts, Happy 2010 to you and yours from us at Gallowglass Academy. We hope that by this time (well, it's new year in the style of the ancient Romans!) you've cleared away all those other holiday letters, and you can put your full attention to the particulars of our 2009 wrap-up and look-ahead to the rest of 2010.

February '09 saw us in a variety of historical get-ups during the days of ReEnactorFest 5 in the northern suburbs of Chicago. Allen taught a short Introduction Bowie Knife combat class, and we debuted our own instructional DVDs on Bowie Knife and Bartitsu (the martial art of Sherlock Holmes). We did a brisk trade in books on WMA, as well as history and culture, and made some promising contacts among the greater reenacting community.

That spring, we offered an 8-week co-educational self defense course at Highland Community College in Freeport, Illinois. Two women stuck with it to the end, probably to enjoy their final exam: the opportunity of an all-out whompin' on Allen (in full protective gear, of course).

At the end of February, and assisted by Mike Pennock and Antina Richards-Pennock, Allen offered a one-day session on the Arte of Defence for a half-dozen eager students of 17th-Century rapier.

We spent a fairly quiet Spring gearing up for summer events. In July, we went to eastern Ohio for the fifth "weekend of Recreational Violence" with Ken Pfrenger and his folks. Allen taught a session on George Silver, and everyone admired our dogs, Moxie and Baron (a brand-new addition at that time, a pit mix rescue).

A fellow we'd met at ReEnactorFest invited us to a knife makers' "Hammer-In" later that month, and we spent a pleasant afternoon in the Chain O Lakes area of northern Illinois. At least one knife was hand-made on site from forge to finish, and probably 40 more collectors and makers talked knives and traded knives. These folks were so focused on making knives that Allen's offering of Bowie Knife combat instruction was met with less than overwhelming interest.

Labor Day weekend saw us, as usual, at the northwestern Chicago area SCA event "Middle Kingdom Academy of Defense" where Allen's alter ego Baron Aelfred of Chester taught sessions on "Introduction to Historical Sword and Buckler" and "Introduction to Silver".

October was a busy month, as we taught a 4-hour women's self defense class on two consecutive Wednesday evenings. Then it was off to Philadelphia for another SCA event: "Knowne Worlde Academy of the Rapier." This year it was combined with "Knowne Worlde Costuming Symposium", so there was more attention to Andrea's offerings of books on non-martial aspects of Renaissance culture. Baron Aelfred taught classes on Swetnam and Geo. Silver. After the weekend, we met up with Randal Gustitis in Bryn Mawr for an evening's workout and Philly cheese steaks. On the way home we soaked up some more recent history by touring Valley Forge and a perfunctory zoom through Gettysburg. (We've already promised ourselves to go back: Gettysburg deserves better.)

Toward the end of October, we again took part in Rock-Con, a regional convention for the wargamers community. Allen offered to teach Bowie Knife and Tomahawk, but these folks are apparently too focused on their miniature restaging of historical battles and theoretical strategies to give much time to experimenting with actual fighting techniques.

Early in November, Allen went up to Wisconsin to work with Bob Charron for a weekend of wrestling and dagger work, and later, the select few who are Members of Gallowglass Academy spent a fruitful day-long session working through Paul Wagner's Highland Broadsword video.

And then time speeded up, as it does at the end of every year.... Thanksgiving whoosh! Black Friday Cyber Monday St. Nicholas Frantic Wednesday zoom! Yule toomuchsnow Christmas Boxing Day Kwanzaa endofyearreports New Years Eve....

.....And then January, when Allen and I, assisted Most Effectively by the Pennocks, delivered a lecture and demonstration of Bartitsu for the Mystery Writers Association at Centuries & Sleuths Bookstore in Forest Park. On the first weekend of February, we celebrated through the ages at ReEnactorFest 6, the first weekend of February, where Allen taught a full house class on Tomahawk.

We are starting March with a bang— no, how about this: We're taking a stab at March with a day-long James Bowie and his Knife class on March 6. At the end of the month, Steve Reich will come to town for a weekend of Bolognese swordwork. Next month, we'll get the games afoot with a day of Bartitsu on April 17, and as a new twist on Mayday – Tomahawk on May 1.

Please take a look at our website www.GallowglassAcademy.org once in a while to see what we've got in store for the rest of 2010, as well as where we're likely to turn up. Allen also writes a blog including reviews of WMA books and such matters (including the Sherlock Holmes movie). Catch his latest entries at <http://www.gallowglassacademy.blogspot.com/>

We wish you all a safe, productive, happy, and otherwise great 2010 – into the future, and beyond!

Andrea Dubnick and C. Allen Reed, for
GALLOWGLASS ACADEMY, Inc.