

The Æthelmearc Travel Guide: The Barony of St. Swithin's Bog

By: Mistress Charmaine of Falkensee(mka Sally Fink)
and Lady Michela Sumervale(m.k.a. Michelle Gelles)



The device of St. Swithin's Bog

Sable, a sinister hand proper sustaining a laurel wreath Or and emerging from a ford proper



Cambria, Somerset, Bedford and Westmoreland Co, PA.

The group currently known as the Barony of Saint Swithin's began organizing in the early 1980's. The founding member was Brother Justinian of Rakovec who got the idea of starting an SCA group in Johnstown when he became involved with the Greensburg shire of Nem-Ra-Noq (later named Nemoralis Noctua). The group was incipient under Nem-Ra-Noq in 1985 as St. Martin's Field.

The name St. Martin's Field was deemed to be too close to St. Martin's in the Field, a famous church in London, so a new shire name was needed. The choice of St. Swithin's Bog stemmed from the watery connotations of St. Swithin himself (who apparently caused forty days of rain after his gravesite was moved) and the Johnstown area, famed for its three floods. We came out of incipiency in 1986 under the name St. Swithin's Bog. The group held its first event in May 1986 at The Ridge outside Johnstown

In the mid-1990's, the shire began pursuing baronial status after discovering that shires were not permitted to give local awards. Baronial status was achieved in 1998, with Sara Charmaine of Falkensee elected the first landed baroness. The Canton of Westland Mor was granted full Canton status in July 2006.

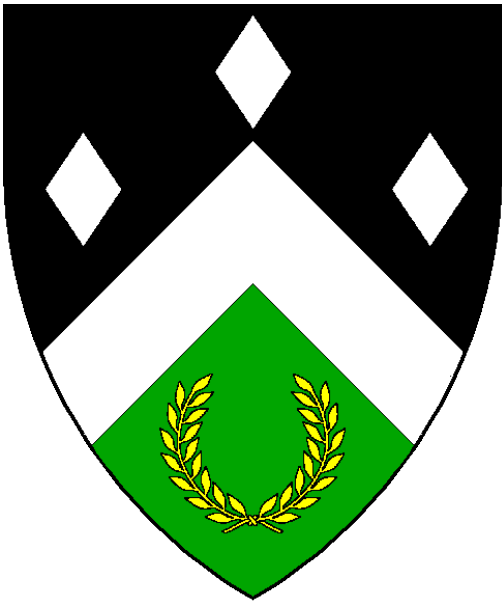
The first newsletter was named "The Reed Mace," and was published from 1987 to 1989. "The Sentinel" began publication in 1992 and has been published continuously since that year. It became an electronic publication in 2002.

Throughout the years the group has been involved in and gained reknown for a wide variety of activities. In the 1980's, members of the group were involved in the beginnings of fencing in the East Kingdom, also brewing, heavy weapons fighting and garb making. In the late 1980's and 1990's, the group was known for it's middle eastern dancing under the direction of Esmeralda la Andaluz. In the late 1990's and 2000's, our fencers became a force in Æthelmearc to be reckoned with. We count amongst our members a number of Peers including 5 members of the Order of the Pelican and 2 members of the Order of the

Laurel. We currently hold a weekly fighter practice and scribal night as well as periodic arts and sciences heraldry and brewing workshops. Our recently formed Cattail Choraliers have mounted performances for our events.

We hold several events on an annual basis. This includes our annual Twelfth Night the first of which was held in January, a small get together at the home of Charmaine and Justinian. The event has since expanded to host several hundred gentles, approximately 100 of which are treated to a sumptuous period feast during an evening of finery. Food and fighting as well as scribal and arts and science competitions are highlights of our Spring Thing, an event with a different period theme each year in our Canton of Westland Mor. The highlight of each summer in the Bog is our 3-day event, which was first held in July 1990 at the Saddle Club in Salix. The event often includes classes and workshop and a weekend full of martial activities.

We also count ourselves proud servants of the Kingdom of Aethelmearc having hosted Kingdom level events throughout the years as well as taking to the field each Pennsic, for the last several as a member of the Raven's company. However of all of the things our Barony is known for, we are most proud of our widespread reputation for hospitality. Former and honorary "Boggers" throughout the Known World have told us they count the Barony of Saint Swithin's as a second home. In recent years we have recognized some members of the extended family with our friends of the bog award. We invite you to come pay the Bog family a visit.



Per chevron sable and vert, a chevron between three lozenges argent and a laurel wreath Or.

The Canton of Westland Mor is a subordinate group of the Barony of St. Swithin's Bog and was granted full canton status in July 2006 and covers part of Westmoreland County, PA

Source: <http://chatelaine.aethelmearc.org/php/newcomer/map.php>

The map of Aethelmearc was created by Taranach McLeod and Herre Eirik Haarfager Goransson, and is used with their permission.

Layout and editing by THL Hrefna Ulfvarinnsdottir

Would you like to see your group featured in The Æthelmearc Travel Guide? If so, contact the project coordinator, THL Hrefna Ulfvarinnsdottir, at ravenstyx at yahoo dot com or call her at 304-886-1234.