

A KUDZU LEAF SPECIAL EDITION

Contains an event information pullout section.



Agricola Changes His Mind

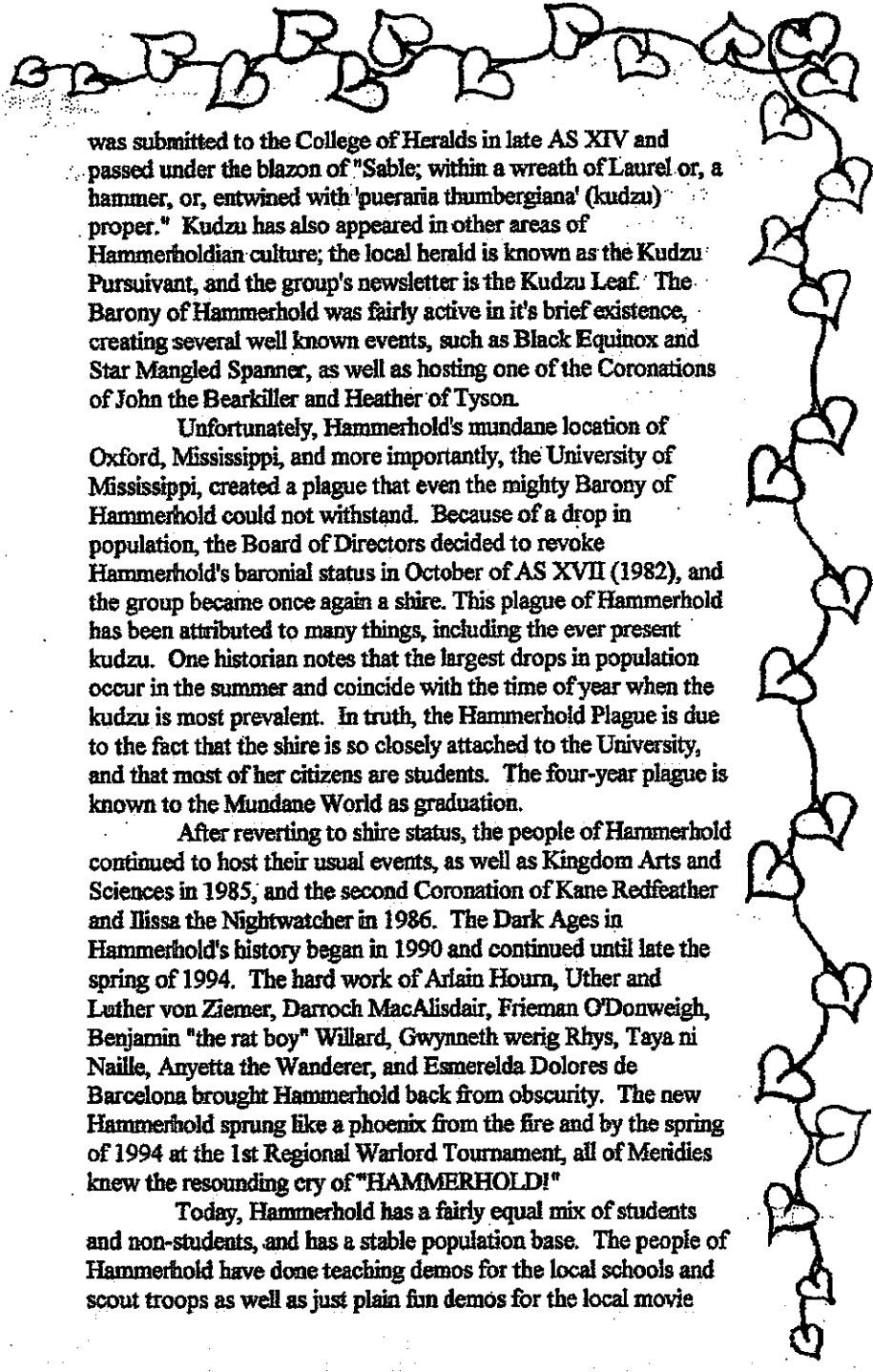
Contrary to the evidence of history, it seems that Agricola, famed invader of Britain, has changed his mind concerning that little island to the west. The Roman Legions, under the command of Agricola himself, have landed on Ireland, and the Celts are ready for them. Despite Agricola's boasts that the island could be taken in one day, it looks like the Romans are in for a tough fight.

So, welcome one and all to the Shire of Hammerhold's 21st Birthday Celebration. We couldn't throw an event without a melee, so Agricola was gracious enough to reconsider the invasion of Ireland. We hope you all enjoy the fighting, classes and festivities, as well as reading this Special Edition Issue of the Shire Newsletter, "The Kudzu Leaf." As this is a shire newsletter there will be some content that is directed more toward residents of the shire than to travellers from other locales. You will note that the center section is easily pulled out and contains event specific information, such as a site map, schedule of events and feast menu. Thank you all for coming and have a great weekend.

A History of the Shire of Hammerhold

The Shire of Hammerhold, then known as The Black Hole of Atenveldt was founded in AS XII, being 1977 Gregorian, under the benevolent leadership of Foscahd the Hammerdwarf. In AS XIII, the group was officially taken into the fold of the Known World and made a shire. The new shire was the first group to be sanctioned in the Mundane state of Mississippi, as well as being the second group in what is now the Incipient Principality of Gleann Abhann. In order to appease the College of Heralds, the Black Hole's name was changed to a more acceptable "Shire of Hammerhold," in respect for it's founding member.

The denizens of the new Shire of Hammerhold were busy in the following year, and grew to such proportions that on September 19, AS XIV (1979), the shire was upgraded to a barony. Gordon Blackwolf and his lady-wife Antonia Martine de Castilla were invested as Baron and Baroness Hammerhold, and were the only gentles to hold that esteemed title. The familiar device of a golden hammer wrapped in bright green kudzu leaves

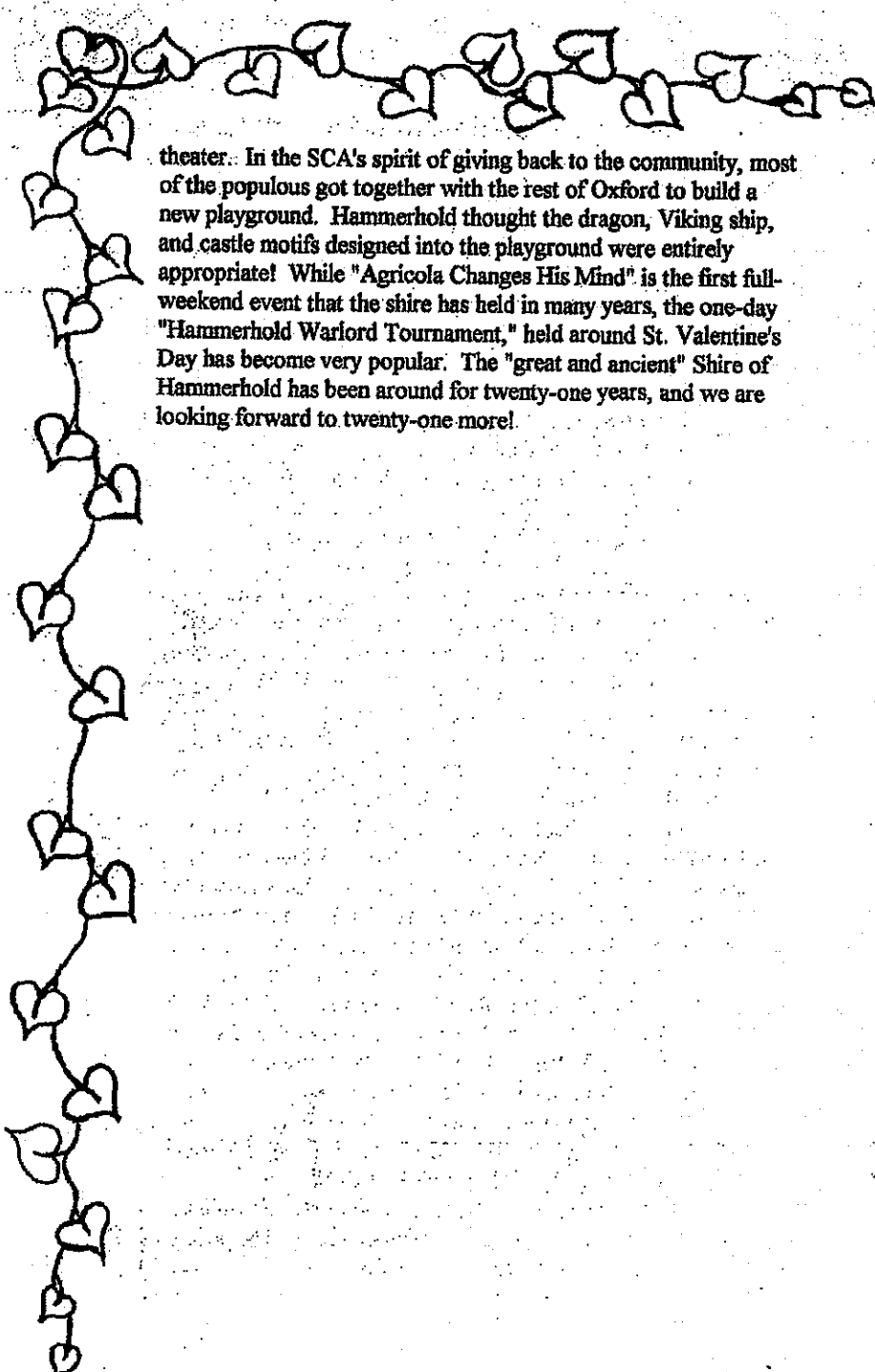


was submitted to the College of Heraldry in late AS XIV and passed under the blazon of "Sable; within a wreath of Laurel or, a hammer, or, entwined with 'pueraria thumbergiana' (kudzu) proper." Kudzu has also appeared in other areas of Hammerholdian culture; the local herald is known as the Kudzu Pursuivant, and the group's newsletter is the Kudzu Leaf. The Barony of Hammerhold was fairly active in its brief existence, creating several well known events, such as Black Equinox and Star Mangled Spanner, as well as hosting one of the Coronations of John the Bearkiller and Heather of Tyson.

Unfortunately, Hammerhold's mundane location of Oxford, Mississippi, and more importantly, the University of Mississippi, created a plague that even the mighty Barony of Hammerhold could not withstand. Because of a drop in population, the Board of Directors decided to revoke Hammerhold's baronial status in October of AS XVII (1982), and the group became once again a shire. This plague of Hammerhold has been attributed to many things, including the ever present kudzu. One historian notes that the largest drops in population occur in the summer and coincide with the time of year when the kudzu is most prevalent. In truth, the Hammerhold Plague is due to the fact that the shire is so closely attached to the University, and that most of her citizens are students. The four-year plague is known to the Mundane World as graduation.

After reverting to shire status, the people of Hammerhold continued to host their usual events, as well as Kingdom Arts and Sciences in 1985, and the second Coronation of Kane Redfeather and Ilissa the Nightwatcher in 1986. The Dark Ages in Hammerhold's history began in 1990 and continued until late the spring of 1994. The hard work of Arlain Hourm, Uther and Luther von Ziemer, Darroch MacAlisdair, Frieman O'Donweigh, Benjamin "the rat boy" Willard, Gwynneth werig Rhys, Taya ni Naille, Anyetta the Wanderer, and Esmerelda Dolores de Barcelona brought Hammerhold back from obscurity. The new Hammerhold sprung like a phoenix from the fire and by the spring of 1994 at the 1st Regional Warlord Tournament, all of Meridies knew the resounding cry of "HAMMERHOLD!"

Today, Hammerhold has a fairly equal mix of students and non-students, and has a stable population base. The people of Hammerhold have done teaching demos for the local schools and scout troops as well as just plain fun demos for the local movie



theater. In the SCA's spirit of giving back to the community, most of the populous got together with the rest of Oxford to build a new playground. Hammerhold thought the dragon, Viking ship, and castle motifs designed into the playground were entirely appropriate! While "Agricola Changes His Mind" is the first full-weekend event that the shire has held in many years, the one-day "Hammerhold Warford Tournament," held around St. Valentine's Day has become very popular. The "great and ancient" Shire of Hammerhold has been around for twenty-one years, and we are looking forward to twenty-one more!