

June Faire Populace Listening Session Number 2, December 8, 2015

Topic: The Marketplace

The discussion was led by Master Arontius. He clarified that he was moderating the discussion because he is a member of the June Faire Committee NOT the June Faire Board and is tasked with researching the Marketplace. Dame Ellen is the Marketplace Coordinator for June Faire 2016.

I have collected the comments into broad topics below.

Jurying

Some merchants feel our jurying is too strenuous; too excessive for an SCA environment.

Dame Gwen has been Merchant Coordinator for June Faire on a number of occasions. She feels our jurying is not excessive. What is considered strenuous? Merchants should project a period aesthetic.

If you're a merchant in the SCA you should want your set-up to look period.

Many people agreed with this sentiment.

Are we expecting more of the merchants than from other activities?

Dame Gwen said she saw no pop-ups in A&S, archery and on the erics.

We don't like to see lots of blue plastic.

Last year one person was turned down for having a sub-standard set-up.

Non-SCA merchants are put off by our increased standards.

Some merchants ignored the criteria and set up anyway. There is no policing after they are set up. We are being kind by not kicking people out even though they don't follow the criteria.

How can we enforce consistency among those that don't want to comply?

Most modern visitors don't see the inconsistency in standards and it doesn't bother them.

There have been some complaints of the cost of a quality merchant booth. It is not the responsibility of the Barony to guarantee a living to anybody. We are not a Promoter. Our booth fees are less than \$199.99. Anything over that would make the Barony a Promoter which would entail more costs and rules.

Some merchants have signed the contract but have showed up with sub-standard booth but aren't asked to leave.

We should have a "naughty" and "nice" list. (We do)

We know who the good ones are. They should be given prime real estate. The naughty ones get the back 40. ("Shame Alley")

There is some inconsistency in the quality of pavilions in the Marketplace. Some are nice canvas with dags and such but others are unadorned pop-ups.

Some merchants spend a lot of money on a quality pavilion set-up and are told the next year that their set-up isn't good enough. Merchants with nice pavilions sometimes are surrounded by unadorned pop-ups. This is not fair.

Guidelines/standards

We don't have standards but we do have a bare minimum. Make an effort. The look of the event has come a long way over the years.

We need a standard.

We need to be consistent with everybody. Guidelines need to be clear.

We need to have published standards and ask people to leave if they don't comply.

Who will develop the expectations?

Make expectations clear and disseminate on FB and Kingdom mailing lists.

There is a concern that we'll be making the criteria too restrictive. We may not get enough merchants.

If the standards are too high we'll get fewer merchants. Are we catering to the modern public or to the SCA?

Consider invitation only?

We don't do an invitational for the fighters or the other activities.

Quality/type of merchandise

Some people want to see more variety of goods for sale.

Garage sale wares shouldn't be at June Faire.

What we sell depends on what merchants we have.

SCA merchants tend to cater to the SCA.

Does the jury take into account the type of merchandise that will attract modern shoppers?

Many merchants sell both SCA and modern merchandise.

Some people would like to see quality merchandise that integrates artisanship.

Merchant Placement

The criteria for placement is dependent on the peculiarities of each site.

How much space do we want to allot to the Marketplace?

We could allow invited merchants to set up in front in prime areas with a smaller area for new merchants and mentor them.

Try not to exclude people. Experienced merchants who are up to standard should be given prime spots. Beginners and those not quite up to snuff should be assigned more outlying areas.

There are some logistics involved to allow space to set up large pavilions with lots of frontage.

Merchants (general)

Both moderns and SCA folk shop at our June Faire Marketplace.

Get them in the door (modern visitors) then we can educate them.

We have a new June Faire site. With the new site we can make a clean break. What is the Barony's goal for Merchants? The larger the gate attendance the more money the merchants are likely to make. What do we want the merchants to do for us? Is this a good time to make these changes?

What are enough merchants?

Kamar has a good reputation with many of the merchants. He is willing to assist the merchant craft. We don't want to alienate the merchants.

Would like to see disenfranchised merchants return.

Redefining the marketplace is a good idea. It may mean we have fewer merchants but quality is better than quantity.

Are food merchants part of merchant's row? Where should they be placed? They can't be held to the same standard. We need more food merchants.

Balance the medieval look and feel.

Is there a contract for merchants? Does it ask how long they've been merchants? If you've been in for a long time you should have an acceptable set up.

June Faire is a premier event in An Tir; we should have premier merchants. Beginners can start at smaller events.

Modern visitors don't understand the difference between merchant's row and the A&S village. Could/should they be integrated?

Many years ago we had around 60 merchants in the Bowl at the Pt. Gamble site with the rest of the event being across the street. People came in to shop and didn't go over to see the rest of the event. We don't want that. Merchants should be part of the show, not the entire show.

Moderns come in for shopping, then they hang around and see the other activities. We can draw them in with good quality merchandise.

The Marketplace is one of the draws of the event.

Merchants have to make their costs.

What is June Faire?

June Faire is our big recruiting drive.

What is June Faire about? Do people shop for modern stuff or SCA stuff?

Are people coming to the event to shop or watch activities?

What do we want June Faire to do? What is the goal?

June Faire should give the public the greatest experience that we can.

Purpose is to recruit. If there isn't much that people like they won't come back.

Do moderns come to watch the fighting only?

Jurying and related topics was the only Marketplace topic covered at tonight's meeting. Other Marketplace topics that should be discussed in the future include:

Fees vs donations

Physical location of Merchant's Row at the event.

Integration with Arts & Sciences

Additional fees levied by the county just for having merchants. Who should pay these?

What are the standards?

The next Listening Session is at fight practice on January 8, 2016. The topic is camping and marshallate.

The schedule for future Listening sessions is as follows:

Camping & Marshallate – January 8, 2016

Archery/TW/Seige – January 26, 2016

Arts & Sciences – February 9, 2016

Logistics/Infrastructure – TBD

Volunteerism - TBD