



ANTOIR

Editorial

I would see the White Tree in flower again in the courts of the kings, and the Silver Crown return, and Minas Tirith in peace: Minas Anor again as of old, full of light, high and fair, beautiful as a queen among other queens...

Welcome all to Anor 33!

A great welcome to those of you who are new to the society, and of course to the usual suspects.

Cambridge is a place that nurtures both the best and the weirdest of the world's talent. The *crème de la crème* of both these categories tend to turn up in the Tolkien Society. We're a very privileged bunch! In the pages of this term's Anor, you'll find write-ups of our doings from long ago and not so long ago, and the usual medley of serious, comical, and tragicomical writings. Anor is a very cathartic thing¹.

And, in the vein of some elections, at this, the beginning of my second year of editing, I say to you all: I promise to make this publication a welcome end to every term this year, as long or as far as it is within my power to do so. My thanks (as usual) go to my campaign staff (whose names you'll see below). Without them this entire journal would be written by me, and, as my supervisors will tell you, that would be a perilously garrulous affair. Much like this editorial.

I had promised a little booklet entitled 'Chapter 81' to the cast of the Reading, to commemorate our efforts and our hard work. But, sadly, dissertations and third year work take a lot of time. So to the cast I say this: the last pages are for you.

Anna Slack, Editor

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¹ Editor's Note: This term is the term that the English Department tries to kill all those who made it to their final year by making them study tragedy. All of it. Endlessly. It is having a detrimental effect on your editor's sanity.

The board was set, the pieces were moving... It was the day of

The Eagle Debate 2004

Round I: The Prologue

Gimli: Just to pre-empt the usual: I'm an expert fighter, I don't have heavy armour and weapons. You will need good fighters at Mt Doom, you know, as you never know when the orcs are going to turn up.

Merry: I'm the hobbit that had compassion and good sense from the start.

Aragorn: I'm just as good as Gimli, but I carry less equipment and I'm faster on the ground.

Gandalf: I'm responsible for the best fireworks in all of Middle-Earth, and I'm equipped with a 200 watt torch.

Sam: I'm everything that Frodo is, except I'm the only one to give away the Ring unaided. So I'm just as good as Frodo, but better.

Legolas: I'm better than everyone! I have a bow for long distance, and a knife for short. I'm also the lightest around.

Pippin: I challenge Legolas to a weighing competition! Out of the two of us, Merry is heavier, since he ate that pumpkin at Elrond's. You also need someone of intelligence on this mission.

Boromir: I'm also a very good fighter – and I have a great device for summoning aid in Mordor.

Frodo: I'm the one this quest was meant for from the outset, and I have the Ring. That besides, this mission isn't just for the fighters. In the end, it is hobbit sense that will out, and their slow-kindled courage.

The Weakest Link: Boromir, with four votes

Famous Last Words: He blew his horn in a mournful fashion and bounced into the ancient bounds of Gondor.

Round II: I Resemble That Remark!

Merry: (*Accusation: You snore terribly!*) You think we're going to sleep in Mordor? Sleeping is the least of our worries!

Aragorn: (*A: Why can't you just introduce yourself as 'Aragorn'?*) I'm proud of my heritage. The names show my honour and valour, and those show that I am capable of seeing this through.

Gandalf: (*A: What if you set the eagle on fire with that staff?*) I couldn't possibly, it's perfectly safe. The Eagles are great engineers, they designed this staff. I also speak Eagle.

Sam: (*A: Aren't you really just an ill-spoken poor example of the lower-classes, promoting a lack of self-respect?*) Yes Sir, thank you Sir.

Legolas: (*A: You spend so much time cleaning your hair that you're hardly useful!*) I'm an Elf for heaven's sake!

Pippin: (*A: Why are you here? Do you serve a purpose, in the grander scheme of things?*) Look, I am the only one to have had a proper classical education, I've had the best tutors. I can hunt rabbits. Give me a pack of hounds and a bugle and I'll show you!

Frodo: (*A: You do nothing but whine!*) Well, Sam is the lens through which we see physical suffering, and seeing as we see most things through him you can only appreciate my higher level of mental anguish by a physical utterance.

Gimli: (*A: What about the other dwarven rings?*) Don't look at me, I didn't lose them. Dwarves are progressing as a species, you know.

The Weakest Link: Aragorn, with five votes
Famous Last Words: Farewell from Aragorn, son of Arathorn, heir to Isildur Bledulf's son, the elfstone, father to a murdered son, husband to a murdered wife, and I shall have my vengeance in this life or the next!

Round III: The Art of Self-Defence

Gandalf: It's not fair; Gandalf rules!

Frodo: It's the terrible... of Ring!

Sam: Kill you if try anything.

Legolas: I'm just so damn pretty.

Pippin: No helpful Ents without me.

Gimli: Good with weapons, very cool.

Merry: Hobbit took responsibility in Rohan.

The Weakest Link: Gandalf, with an impressive 9 votes

Famous Last Words: You lose the staff - your loss, not mine! =floats unlike a feather to the ground>

Round IV: The West Wing

Frodo: I have to say that everyone is just great, first off, for coming this far with me and all. But, Sam is simply the best. He cooks, he sings, he's my constant companion. He's just way better than I am.

Sam: Everyone has their own strengths - but Gimli is neither too tall nor too short, he's nicely in the middle, he beats Legolas' hair, he's good with weapons, he can do fireworks just as well as Gandalf...

Legolas: Gimli is the only dwarf to ever respect the Elves.

Pippin: It's very important to have little hobbits, for as we all know these are the days of the little people. Frodo is simply getting too big for his boots, but Merry, on the other hand...

Gimli: There are too many hobbits on this Eagle (*general gasp!*). Legolas and me are the best. We need to be here to protect them!

Merry: I say we keep Frodo. He's got this far after all, and as we know the Ring is terrible. Why should we increase the collateral by giving it to someone else?

The Weakest Link: Pippin, with 6 votes

Famous Last Words: When that Baggins puts that Ring on and becomes the Dark Lord you'll all be sorry!

Round V: Desert Island Discs

Sam: I would take Frodo, 'cos someone has to look after him, and I would take the Ring, because if we can get it over the sea that would be the end of all our troubles.

Legolas: I need to drum, you know, so I would take Gimli and his shield, to drum on. Actually, scrap Gimli, just the shield: I have so much ego that I need only take myself.

Gimli: Well, if Legolas has got my shield I guess I'd better go with him. I'd take Galadriel's hair.

Merry: Even though he's gone, I would take Pippin. And a barrel of pipeweed.

Frodo: I would take Bilbo, the hobbit I love most in all the world, and I would take Arwen's necklace, to give to him to ease him from all his terrible burdens.

The Weakest Link: Merry, with six votes

Famous Last Words: He was too overwhelmed to speak

Round VI: Laws of Gravity

Legolas: Gimli is too heavy, Sam is too fat. Get rid of them! And, I don't have such a big ego.

Gimli: Legolas' ego counts for two, thus weighing much more than the rest of us.

Frodo: Since we seem to be concerned with the weight ratio... I would like to point out that after all my toil, stabbing, stung with tooth, etc, I am fading from that wraith stab, making me much lighter than everyone else...

Sam: Well, I know you're all saying that I'm the heaviest, but I'd like to suggest cutting my limbs off - I'll still be able to carry Frodo, even having made this surgical strike. Also, if you take away me you lose the only real love story in the plot.

The Weakest Link: Legolas, with eight votes

Famous Last Words: I'm the prettiest, I'm off to Valinor; who cares?

Round VII: Here Be Dragons

Gimli: I'd assassinate Smaug. Then all the Dalites would still be alive, and the Ring... Well, obviously it would be found by Gollum in the mountains, who Bilbo would meet en route to see our fabulous wealth... I mean, it would still be a great story.

Frodo: Glaurung. In order to put a halt to that terrible Wagnerian incest thing!

Sam: Damn. I was going to say Glaurung... Ancaligon. 'Cos I can't remember any other dragons.

The Weakest Link: Sam, seven votes (Faramir did not supply chocolate to the voters: oathbreaker!?)

Famous Last Words: Geronimoooooooooooooooooooo!

Round VIII: Dark Lord's Question Time

Question: I put it to you, assuming you get to Mt Doorn, and up to the very cracks of Fire, and assuming you stand there and in the last possible instant you decide to claim it for yourself. In the occasion of becoming a dark lord, what is your policy on student tuition fees?

Gimli: I'd have all the gold I need, from everywhere, it would all be mine. I can pay for it all!

Frodo: I have to stress at first that I would not claim the Ring. Hypothetically, if I did... the shadow ever rises before us, even in defeat, and I find it difficult to count on enough prosperity to tackle this issue up front.

The Weakest Link: Frodo, with a record-breaking ten votes

Famous Last Words: Gimli, son of Gloin, I bequeath to you the Ring, and hope that you shall make better use of it than I did.

² Faramir (Nick Price) and the editor (Samwise) are embroiled in a long term war. Samwise strikes again.

Victory Speech from Gimli: Treasure here I come – grants for all!

The Players:

Gandalf: Sarah Arnold
Aragorn: Simon (Missed your surname – let me know and I'll credit you!)
Boromir: Helen Cousins
Legolas: Amieih Yogarajah
Gimli: Thea Wilson
Frodo: Anna Slack (*uncanonically! They wouldn't let me play Sam!*)
Sam: Jack Vickeridge
Merry: Vanessa Maybeck
Pippin: Matthew Woodcraft

Anna E. Slack

What If.. Numenor was not sunk?

In which Numenor's fate is put back a few hundred years and Isengrim Took does not appear.

Fit the First - In which Numenor is Not Sunk

When Ar-Pharazon sailed with ten thousand ships and 90% of the male population of Numenor Manwe decided that instead of panicking and over reacting he would sink the ships but not the island. Numenor lives on, for Glory, God and the Betterment of Man...

Fit the Second - In which a Wedding

Sauron/Annatar was thus still resident on Numenor, complete with Fair Form. Rejoicing in the sinking of the fleet he resolved to take over Numenor by marrying its queen - Tar Miriel. Miriel is duely coerced into marrying him, but just as the wedding is about to end Mrs Sauron appears and drags Mr Sauron off to do 300 years worth of washing up. Her haranging causes him to lose the ability to take Fair Form: everyone go 'awwww'.

Miriel marries Anarion instead (he has a nice name) and the royal line of Numenor continues.

Fit the Third - In which a Ring is Lost and Found

Back in Middle Earth Sauron is washing up in Barad Dur, but to do so he has removed his Ring. Mrs Sauron notes the absence of her husband's wedding ring on his finger and is furious, suspecting infidelity. During the ensuing fight the Ring falls into the sink and is lost. The plumbing breaks and Mordor floods - leading to the formation of the sea of Numen.

The Ring is later found by none other than the son of Sauron and Tar Miriel (who we shall call Hushim, as Son-of-Sauron is long and hard to type) who has been sent away from Numenor by Anarion, who desires that his own son (Ar-gh) should take the throne. Having found the Ring Hushim does nothing with it, unaware of its power and indeed of his own since he has been raised mortal.

Sauron takes off in a huff from Mordor resolving to never again wash up and takes up residence in Dol Guldur with the Ringwraiths (chief amongst whom is Ancy).

Fit the Fourth - In which a Map and Several Hundred Years

Numenor is a divided land, Steward ruling 5 smaller Kingdoms, overall Stewardship changing on an almost weekly basis - being held by whichever steward holds the centre of the island; an ongoing game of capture the flag. The 'rangers of the sea' sail around the island and the seas to the East, occasionally talking to Gilgalad.

Gilgalad, Elrond, Cirdan, Oropher and Glorfindel are the chiefs of an Eldar realm stretching from the Havens to Mirkwood, Dwarves are resident in Moria, Hobbits in Ithilien and the Brown Lands to the North of Mordor, Eol the young having left the North lands when it got a bit too cold up there and anyway the elves were being snorty and then Sauron showed up and was even more annoying (if less pretty) has founded Rohan.

Sauron rules in Dol-guldur, although he doesn't rule over much. Oropher has a tight hold on most of Mirkwood. Mrs Sauron is revealed now to be Galadriel (after Sauron and Celebrimbor made the rings Sauron set his eyes on Galadriel and decided that he must have her. Sauron v. Celeborn later roughly 0.125 of a second and Galadriel was his) who reigns now in Mordor where she along with the Entwives, Shelob and some 'posh' and rather corrupt hobbits from Ithilien have created gardens to rival those of Yavanna in the West.

Fit the Fifth - In which a War

Galadriel (having called the Blue Wizards in to fix the plumbing problems she was having) decides to go to war against her errant husband, rounding up the help of the entwives, the hobbits and her now grown daughter (little Miss Sauron, otherwise known as Celebrion) who is now married to Elrond and resident in Imladris. A two-prong attack on Dol Guldur is made from the South and from the West. Battle lines form and dig in for a good long war.

Gilgalad is worried about the state of Middle Earth and sends Aragorn son of Arrogant son of Arrowroot of the 'sea rangers' off to Numenor to look for help amongst the old allies of the Elves.

Fit the Sixth - in which There are Two Kings

When Aragorn son of... leaves the Havens for Numenor, Hushim also sets out from the Bay of Belfalas, hoping to avoid the war (hoping also that no-one in Numenor remembers who he is...). Both men are shipwrecked and find themselves captive in Numenor - Aragorn landing to the North, Hushim to the South. At this point Manwe sees fit to send Olorin and Aruman to the aid of the 'True King'; however they become separated and one lands to the North, the other to the South - each finding a 'True King' to support.

Since the Istari are advertising the kingliness of both Aragorn and Hushim the Numenoreans decide that the Crown will be won by combat. The games held on the ascension of a new chief steward have been becoming more and more expensive and opulent as the years have gone by and the Numenoreans are no strangers to gladiatorial combat.

Fit the Seventh - in which a Sinking

The combat is decreed to be 'last man standing' but for added interest the Balrog is imported from Moria to be a third contestant. Gilgalad is summoned to referee and with him bring Glorfindel. During the fight the Ring (on a chain around Hushim's neck) slips into view and Gilgalad recognises it - his startled shout alerts Hushim to the Ring and for the first time he recognises its power: he puts it on. As Hushim vanishes Aragorn yells 'I am Aragorn, son of Arrogant, so of Arrowroot, last decedent of Miriel in this world, rightful king of this land AND I SHALL HAVE MY VENGEANCE IN...!' As the Balrog dives to attack him Olorin leaps in front shouting 'thou shalt not pass!'. Aruman joins the fight and suddenly Manwe decides that enough is enough and this is quite silly enough for anyone and that it shouldn't be allowed to go on any longer - and the island of Numenor vanishes below the waves.

Fit the Eighth - in which a Fleet and a Submarine

Denethor son of Ecthelion and his sons Boromir the easily tempted and Faramir of many tragedies escape (with boats) to found a country of their own on the West coast of Middle Earth, somewhat South of the Havens.

Vingilot becomes a yellow submarine - selling Hobbit weed to the inhabitants of Valinor whilst 'looking for the Ring' under the sea.

Fit the Ninth - an End to One War, a Start to Another

Galadriel, finally fed up with the piles of dishes, gives in and starts the washing up, taking off her ring to do so. Finally she knows why Sauron didn't have his ring on. How stupid this war is! The war is ended and the Saurons reconciled - going to live in Barad Dur.

The ents, driven barking mad by the war, set off to invade Denethor's kingdom thinking that they have the entwives - nobody knows why - Faramir is sent on a quest to the Iron Hills to find help, but he fails and is killed (with arrows). The newly fledged kingdom of Denethor is over run by ents, ending it before it had really begun. The men of Rohan ride to their aid - and are also cut down.

Fit the Tenth - in which a Lesbian Socialist Utopia (well, Matriachal Totalitaria)l Regime if you must know); with flowers.

After the deaths of the war-like civilisations of men Middle Earth is under the power of Galadriel (who clearly wears the trousers), it is a beautiful garden full of flowers and fluffy animals. Elrond, left in charge by GG goes along with this scheme and the whole of Middle Earth is one huge garden.

Manwe, sickened by the cute, removes Valinor from Middle Earth and the earth is round.

This term's mythos-mutilators:

Helen Cousins
Sarah Arnold
Pip Steele
Thea Wilson
Becky Corlett
Simon
Jonathan Woolgar
Esther Miller
Amieth Yogarajah
Jack Vickeridge
Matthew Woodcraft
Matthew Davison
Anna Slack

Helen Cousins

The Madness Revisited...

At long last we are privileged to a write-up of those silly sketches put on last year: *The Prologue*, *The Old Forest*, and *A Farce in the Dark*...



Back left: Becky Corlett, Nick Taylor, Lawrence Davis, the author (obscured!), Richard Smith, Matthew Woodcraft, Naath, Pip Steele, Hobbit Front Line: Thea Wilson, Sarah Arnold, Rhiannon, Esther Miller, Anna Slack

It all ended with people giving us very strange looks. I knew it would – how else could a production end which involved the Ringwraiths who say ‘Ni’, a cameo appearance by Tom Bombadil, Smeagol’s version of the recovery of the One Ring, a catfight between Glorfindel and Arwen, and Isildur’s men prancing around the stage clacking coconut shells together? Yes, I predicted that people would look at us with that half-pitying, half-disbelieving look which says, ‘maybe if I sidle away slowly they won’t notice I’m gone.’ I did think it might be the audience; I didn’t anticipate it being the attendant at the Science Museum’s Lord of the Rings exhibition.¹

She should really have expected it – after all, what do you expect, standing in the shadow of a scale replica of the Argonath? Still, I suppose to be fair, she couldn’t have known that a group of students would turn up and start chanting (in slightly halting unison) lines like “I cannot read the fiery letters” and “Curses and black pudding! My cunning plan foiled! Foiled!” She couldn’t have known... and neither could we.

This is the story of an insane production. It is a story of frantic rehearsals; of spears made from fishing rods and knives blu-tacked together; and of searching Cambridge for a suit of armour. It is the story of a production shorter than *The Return of the King*; more hilarious than

¹ Editor’s Note: See Anor 31: *The Fellowship Rides to (South) Kensington*

Macbeth; cheaper than *Waterworld*; better-organised than an anarchist convention; and more original than *The Matrix: Reloaded*. For those of you who didn’t see them, this is the story of... the sketches that didn’t really have a title.

It all began, for me at least, with an audition. Auditions, for those of you who have never been stupid enough to do one, are a method of making a fool of yourself in front of a small audience, in order to secure the opportunity to make a fool of yourself in front of a large one. It was in this spirit that I walked into the New Hall music room prepared to transform myself into the Witch King of Angmar. I quickly realised two things – firstly, these sketches were very funny; and secondly, my deep Witch-King voice was going to give me a sore throat after too long.

After a time, I got an email telling me that not only I had been cast as the Witch-King, I was also going to play Gil-galad. Fine, I thought – I don’t mind playing two parts. However, this tendency for acquiring extra roles continued to manifest itself, meaning that by the day of the performance, I was also playing Tom Bombadil and one of Isildur’s men, meaning that I needed a variety of costumes and something approaching multiple personality disorder. Still, it didn’t matter – this rehearsal business was turning out to be a lot of fun. I don’t think the entire cast was ever assembled until the day of the performance, meaning that random people had to double up and, in a few cases, perform scenes on their own, talking to themselves. This only added to the hilarity, combining with shaky props, a shakier grasp of our lines, and the utter silliness of the script to reduce us on a number of occasions to helpless laughter.



*I say Gil-galad, old possum, old fruit, do you have time to overthrow a dark lord?
I have nothing else to do this age – sure, why not?*

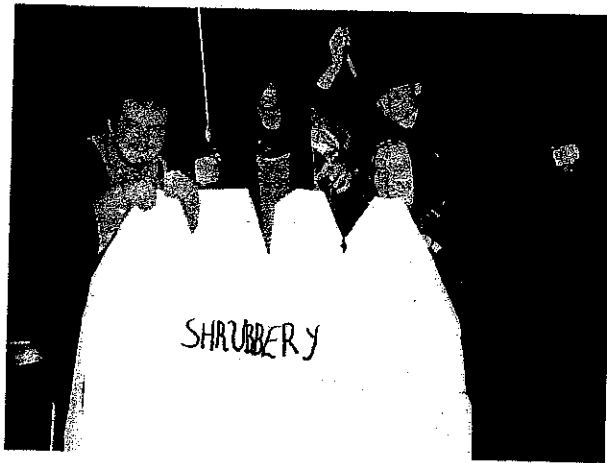
The high point of my performance (or at least, the bit I enjoyed most) was the Witch-King’s dramatic production of his deadly weapon – the WraithMaker 3000 (mock it not). The WraithMaker (mock it not) was originally envisaged as a scarily cool sword, possibly even a lightsabre, which the Witch-King could brandish menacingly at the hapless Narrator (Mathew Woodcraft, at this point in full cowering mode), who spent a large part of that scene quivering in fear. However, the script called for Gandalf, like some millennia-old neighbour from hell, to borrow my weapon and break it. Anyone who has ever been in a play before will know that getting props to break is easy – getting them to break when you want them to is not. Thus, a cunning plan was devised, and one which came within our rather meagre special-effects budget.

A WraithMaker 3000 (mock it not) that Gandalf could surreptitiously take apart in order to give the illusion of breaking it. The prop was duly produced – a plastic knife with a black hilt and a blade fully ten, perhaps twelve centimetres long from hilt to tip, which glowed slightly in the dark and collapsed when you stabbed someone with it. Not quite a legendary weapon of untold power, but a lot funnier, especially when the time came for me to draw forth my deadly blade.

"I get to stab him, you know," I declaimed. "With this!" I drew the WraithMaker (mock it not) with a flourish... and discovered that I was only holding the hilt. The blade had become stuck in my belt, leaving me brandishing a particularly unimpressive weapon, and the rest of the cast falling about with laughter. Still mostly in character, I growled, "Mock it not!" which, for those of you entirely confused by now, explains my overuse of that particular phrase.

Now things were coming together, except for those that were coming apart. Our grasp of our lines went from being shakier than an ex-boxer in an earthquake, to as firm as... as a very firm thing (I'll leave your imagination to fill in something). We worked out our entrances and exits, decided that two chairs labelled "Tree" would have to do to represent a tree, honed dialogue, shoehorned in more Monty Python references, and generally polished the performance until it shone like a simile. We struggled with lines like, "I saw something, or thought I did – away westwards where the moonlight was falling on the flats beyond the shadow of the hilltops," (all Tolkien's fault); we struggled to contain our laughter as Helen overacted magnificently in the part of a rather hyperactive Glorfindel ("No – I'm a flying Nazgûl!").

However, the Oscar for Best Overacting in a Tolkien Society Sketch had to go to Richard. His German Ringwraith was positively understated next to his portrayal of Sauron; perhaps understandably, given that he was fresh from playing a panto villain, Richard hammed it up to great effect. His most dramatic scene came when Isildur hacked the ring from his finger. "I'm melting! Fading away into disembodiment... fade... fade..."



The Ringwraiths who said 'ni!', and their shrubbery

So the end was near, and now we faced our final curtain – the curtain around the back of the stage in the Newnham Old Labs. It was the first dress rehearsal, and everyone was wearing some approximation to a costume – I in my shiny horned helmet as Gil-galad; the hobbits wearing shirts and waistcoats; Lawrence wearing string-vest chainmail and a leather jacket, making him look like some kind of medieval biker. The Ringwraiths had their black cloaks, Arwen had her resplendent (I've always wanted to use that word) Elven dress, Gandalf was fully bearded, and Tom Bombadil had his battered hat with its blue feather (for those of you picturing me wearing some sort of deep-fried headgear, that wasn't the sort of "battered" I meant). The only slight dampener on things was the realisation that I was going to spend most of the performance hiding behind various doors and curtains, meaning that I would see very little of the scenes I wasn't in.

I could, however, hear them, and I could hear the audience's laughter. At some points, I could almost hear the audience thinking "What? That's just weird." Thea's permanently bemused Pippin got the biggest laugh when the narrator suggested she read the book, at which she exclaimed, "Oooh – they've done a book version already?" The Ringwraiths who say "Ni!" came a very close second, creeping stealthily in behind the cover of a lifesize cardboard replica of four hobbits, cunningly disguised as a shrubbery (i.e. labelled, in large, easy-to-read letters, 'shrubbery' – did I mention the special effects budget?). Miraculously, the dreaded memory-sucking monster we call stage fright was kept at bay, mostly by an increasing sense of unreality created mainly by being surrounded by cloaked Nazgûl, hobbits, bearded wizards, and multiple simulacra of the One Ring.

So – what did I gain from all this madness? Well, I managed to make off with a pair of coconut shells (or "an imitation horse," as I like to call them); a commemorative ring of power; a rather battered top hat, complete with blue feather; a suit of cardboard armour, a horned helmet, a lot of great memories, and a whole host of new friends, some of whom are as crazy as I, or least approaching it. Oh, and a very strange look from an attendant in the Science Museum.

Not long after the sketches, a group of us, mainly ex-cast members, went to see the Lord of the Rings exhibition in London. It was there that we decided (without even the influence of alcohol to blame) that an impromptu re-enactment of the sketches would be appropriate. So it was that, under the watchful eye of some rather bemused passers-by, we attempted to recite chunks of the script, including a reprise of Sauron's wonderfully melodramatic death scene.

"I'm melting! Fading away into disembodiment... fade... fade..."

And that seems as good a place as any to end.

Tim Kelby

Return of the Sketches: Watch this space for a write-up of this year's sketch silliness; *The Party*, *At Home With the Saurons* and *The Lord of the Goons: The Ownership of the Ring*. Coming soon to an Anor near you... Unless Mr. Kelby writes it!

The 2004 Varsity Quiz Or... The Fellowship Marches on Oxford



The Minas Tirith Contingent in front of the Score Board: Helen Cousins, Sarah Arnold, Matthew Reid, Matthew Woodcraft, Jack Vickeridge; Front: Anna Slack, Michelle; Door: Nick Taylor. Photo by the previous Steward, Gabby Suto, who refused to be photographed.

The annual Varsity Quiz, as you may be aware, took place on the 28th February 2004, a day of reasonable weather and much fun.

The Minas Tirith (Cambridge) contingent got off to a painfully early start (i.e. 9:10am), getting on to a bus which was quite clearly a servant of Sauron, judging by the way the temperature fluctuated between the grinding ice of Helcaraxë and the fires of Mount Doom over the subsequent 3 hours. Soon ascertaining that there were, indeed, exactly nine persons present, it seemed intuitively obvious to form a Fellowship.

And so a Fellowship was formed. With a certain amount of friendly debate over who got to be the favourite Hobbit/Elf/Wizard.

Upon arrival, the Fellowship was met by Maria, an all-powerful Istar of Taruithorn, the Oxford team's cunningly, we had persuaded her to assist Thea in the writing of questions for the quiz, rather than putting her super brains to maximum use by participating in the quiz itself.

Being, as we were, ravenously hungry, we then proceeded to search Oxford for a suitably cheap restaurant prepared to accommodate between 15 and 20 people on short notice. A suitable establishment was located, food was consumed, as well as some (but not too much) beer.

The Fellowship were led into Christ Church College, and those who had not seen it before were duly impressed, and those who had were anxious to get on with the quiz.

After some discussion and persuasive words, the Formidable Cambridge Team was eventually formed consisting of:

Team Minas Tirith: Matthew Woodcraft, Matthew Reid, Sarah Arnold, Anna Slack, Nicholas Taylor
Quizmaster/mistress: Naath (Helen) Cousins

Questions set by: Thea Wilson and Maria Artamonova

The quiz consisted of 6 parts, which bear an uncanny similarity to those in the immortal Tinúviel Pursuit. The rounds were (not necessarily in this order): The Hobbit and Hobbits, Lord of the Rings 1, Life and Languages, Minor Works, Lord of the Rings 2, Posthumous Works.

The rules were simple: teams were asked alternate questions; should the first team answer incorrectly, the question passed across to the other team. 2 points for answering your question; 1 for answering one of *theirs*.

For those who are dying to see sample questions, a couple of examples from each of the rounds are as follows:

The Hobbit and Hobbits
Complete Gollum's riddle:
Alive without breath
As cold as death
Never thirsty, ever drinking...²

Lord of the Rings
In what date did Wormtongue kill Saruman?³

Whose true (untranslated) names are Trahald and Nahald?⁴

Life and Languages
What, according to Tolkien, is the most beautiful word, phrase, or group of words in the English language?⁵

Minor Works
What's Polar Bear's real name?⁶

Posthumous Works
Name the character in what was to become *The Silmarillion* who originally wielded a kitchen knife (later replaced by a dagger).⁷

Well, tally was kept and neither team were found to be receiving an unfair excess of either easy or hard questions, and at the end of the 6 rounds the winning team was...

...Cambridge!

For the first time in as long as mortal memory extends, Minas Tirith won the Varsity Quiz. Final score: 40 to Minas Tirith, 37 to Taruithorn.

Well, naturally then there was the unanimous decision that some kind of reward for our hard work was in order, so the two teams began to think about pubs. The offer of a tour of Oxford's finer sights was also on offer, so various Fellowship members elected to take up this kind offer. Highlights included the Oxonian Bridge of Sighs, which curiously goes over a street, and the original pub in which Tolkien and CS Lewis and various of their acquaintances sat and invented worlds.

² 1. "...All in mail, never clinking."

³ 3rd November 1499

⁴ Sméagol and Déagol

⁵ Cellar door

⁶ Karhu

⁷ Beren

Of course, the trip cannot be mentioned without a token reference to the truly spectacular (Jomsbe Orange Scarves and Billowing Cloaks of several CTS members – impressive!

And so to drink – tea, coffee and beer! We filled up a corner of the pub quite marvellously, Oxford ty and Cambridge types alike.

After a long, delightful day, it was finally time to go home. The returning bus was possibly less a word Isengard and more an updated Gwaihir the Eagle, and relatively uncluttered, so CTS members appropriate several seats per person and several of us slept for most of the return journey (thereby being spared roundabouts of Milton Keynes), arriving back just in time to get to Sainsbury's before it shut.

Sarah Arnold

Messing About On The River

On a warm but drizzly Suicide Saturday, seven intrepid travellers met at the rollers, determined to fulfil their oath; to punt to Grantchester, eat more food than humanly possible, effect a transfer of the Cambridge Tolkien Society Committee, and return to Cambridge in time for most members of the party to change and appear in time at a dinner which⁸ shall not be named in this illustrious publication.

After a considerable amount of faffing, the party set off. The double entendres flowed thick and fast:

"I've got a little bottom and I'm pushing on it."
(Nick)

"I'm trying, but I can't get my pole up!"
(Nick)

"I can't find a bottom,"
"I've got one"
"I can see!"
(Nick and Thea)

But the journey was not free from complications: the author still bears the scars of a vicious attack from doughnuts! And, although the punt avoided conflict with Erebor, the black swan of Cambridge, it proceeded to tack up the river against both the wind and the current. A disadvantage of this, not entirely (or even at all) intentional procedure, was that it brought the punts and all their members into a more intimate connection than any desired with every nettle, hawthorn bush and low hanging tree between here and Grantchester.

The travellers remained undeterred however. The more intrepid daring so far as to successfully attempt a bridge hop (although this was a slow motion bridge hop in one case).

Arriving in Grantchester, we were joined by Glorfindel + horse⁹, both hitching a lift back to Cambridge with the party. The horse did not prove the most co-operative of travelling companions and attempted to remain in any tree he met, and, for the record (and the information of every single punt we encountered), no we didn't attempt to ride him on the Cam!

Returning to Cambridge bruised and dripping wet, just as the sun emerged from the clouds, the party were triumphant.

Next year, in return for a promise of better organisation, we expect to see many more of the society on the river¹⁰.

*Thea Wilson
Steward*

⁸ Due to its failure to be organised by the Cambridge Tolkien Society

⁹ Although some might argue that this was, in fact, Helen and her bicycle, they are obviously mistaken.

¹⁰ Note to Editor: Yes, this means you! Punting (preferably mildly inebriated) to Grantchester is an indispensable part of the Cambridge experience!

Free-Verse from the Fresher's Fair

Seized by a state of rapture at the Societies fair in the first week of term, two members of the CTS Committee (and the treacherous quasi-CTS-quasi-CUSFS third) were taken by the Muse, and composed the following for your delight and delectation.

Upon the Desk (To the tune of 'Upon the Hearth')

*Upon the desk the light is on
The brain inside the head is gone
But not yet finished is our work;
Our supervisor is a jerk.
A sudden flash! A bright ideal
But still the answer isn't clear.
When Cambridge posts the Tripos marks,
Let me pass, O let me pass!*

To Robinson (unfinished) (To 'To Rivendell')

*To Robinson, where students dwell
In red-brick towers and prison cells,
Through Newnham long and grey New Hall
With endless girls and corridors.*

Of May Week (To 'Gilgalad Was an Elven King')

*Of May Week we've a tale to bring,
Of it the harpers sadly sing
The last time we were fair and free:
Our work puts pay to all our glee.*

*The nights are long, in day we sleep
The Cam turns out to be quite deep.
We punted out to Grantchester
The drunken balls passed in a blur.*

*But long ago was that sweet day:
Our next free time is far away.
For into darkness fell our star
In lectures where the shadows are.*

In West Cambridge (To 'In Western Lands')

*In west Cambridge near to the Cam,
A group talks on 'til dawn;*

*Of Middle-Earth, the Silmarils,
And Gondor with its horn.
Then once a year to Oxford we
Will face defeat and dread,
But I won't say all hope is lost –
Last year we went ahead.*

*Though here at start of term we lie
In lectures buried deep,
Too many books, no student loan
Cheap food and lack of sleep.
Into this darkness shines a light –
The CTS is here!
Our own great eucatastrophe
– debates and friends and beer.*

Ode to a Penguin – An Ode to the ARK Mascot (To 'There is an Inn')

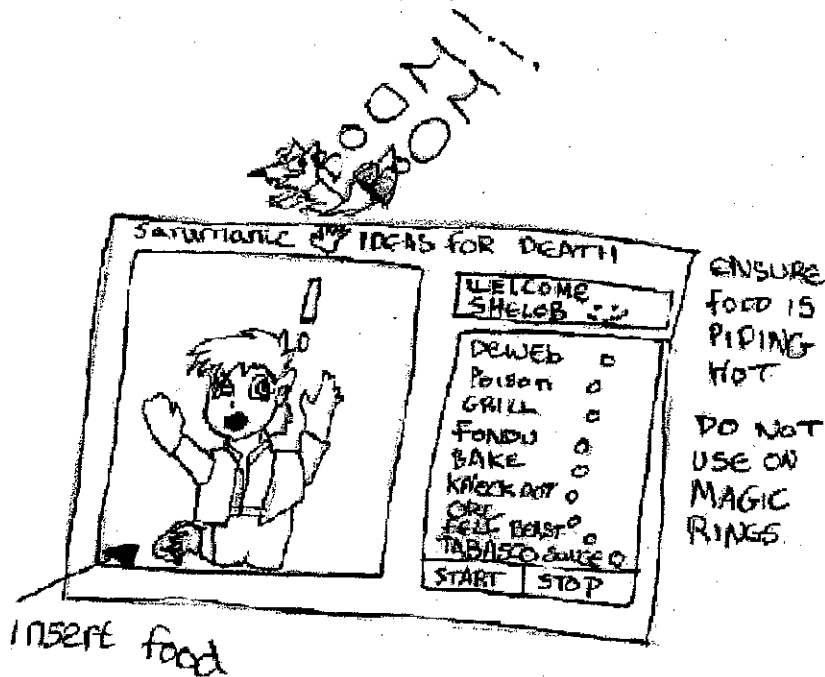
*There is a bird, a merry old bird
Who lives on the Ark stall,
And the effect it had was so profound
That the CTS themselves came round
To check out what they'd heard.*

*They loved its hat, they loved its coat
They loved its beak and flippers,
When bored to death they formed a scheme
As frivolous as it was mean,
To leave a ransom note.*

*At drawing close they filled with dread
The penguin's wary guards:
All was not lost, for pity struck,
The penguin was in brilliant luck;
As they left a t-shirt instead.*

By the Minas Tirith poetic geni, Thea Wilson, Anna Slack and Helen Cousins

SHELOB'S MICROWAVE



Giulia Stack

Drawing Even

In Middle Earth there are five categories of peoples; the elves, the dwarves, the men, the Orcs and the hobbits. Each of these groups have their advocates. However, over the past few years I have noticed a worrying trend; the reaction of others when they discover that your favourite character is a hobbit: 'Oh! You're a hobbit-fancier, right...?' In this article, I intend to demonstrate why such a reaction is truly unfair. But I intend to go further than this. I plan to describe why the most maligned of this group, young Peregrin Took, does not deserve the censure he receives.

The hobbits and their contemporaries

The supporters of the elves are perhaps the most vocal of all the groups. It is easy to understand their admiration. The elves represent the perfection of humanity. They are beautiful, wise, brave and immortal. True characters of legend. However, they can never be said to be realistic role models. They are an unachievable goal, which whilst commendable, can never be said to be a practical ambition. Likewise the orcs, the polar opposite of the elves, are divorced from much similarity with humanity.

Our identification with the men suffers from the same limitation. Whilst by no means as perfect as the elves, they remain the stuff of legend. The men in Tolkien's work veer from the worst of humanity, embodied in characters like the Haradrim and Ar-Pharazon, to a King Arthur-like perfection in characters like Aragorn, Faramir and the Numenorians. While these characters possess sufficient fallibility and self-doubt to be recognisable humans, their abilities and bravery reaches a degree which those of us living nowadays can only aspire to.

The dwarves, a war-like race who care for little other than honour and riches, represent an extreme version of the capitalist ideal. However, they can never be described either as good role models for us or as realistic examples of humanity in the early 21st century.

The hobbits meanwhile possess many characteristics familiar to us. They seek only a comfortable sociability. Whilst their lifestyle would be more familiar to people living 200 years ago, they remain the most naturally developed race in Middle Earth¹¹. The hobbits appear to be singularly uninterested in the world beyond their world. This can hardly be much criticised, as Douglas Adams puts it:¹²

"The Universe, as has been observed before, is an unsettlingly big place, a fact which for the sake of a quiet life most people tend to ignore. Many would happily move to somewhere rather smaller of their own devising, and this is what most beings in fact do."

The hobbits have simply created a universe in their land of the Shire. Who can blame them? They live a simple life in comfort, happily separate from the dangerous actions of the 'Big People' in the rest of Middle Earth. The criticism of the 'hobbit fanciers' seems to stem largely from the size of hobbits. Those who do not prefer the hobbits see something perverted about identifying with characters that appear the size of children. But they fail to see the insignificance

¹¹ In this, I exclude the development achieved by Saruman – as an istarii, he did not naturally develop in Middle Earth and his inventions cannot therefore be said to have developed naturally.

¹² Douglas Adams, *The Restaurant at the End of the Universe*, Chapter 10

of size to us. The hobbits are not children; they are more like us today than any of the other races of Middle Earth. As such rather than being fantasy creatures, they are our passport into Tolkien's world. They are the creatures most like us; they see the world as we would. They start along with us (at the beginning of the Lord of the Rings), largely unfamiliar with the world which the other races inhabit. They see, from their place of comfort, merely that the outside world is a forbidding place populated by creatures either perfectly good or perfectly evil.

Peregrin Took: the hero in all of us?

Having established that the hobbits are more like us than any other creatures in Middle Earth, I intend to convince you that young Pippin does not deserve the contempt, criticism, and/or lack of recollection with which he is often met. But rather, that he merits a level respect hitherto not forthcoming.

The four principal hobbits in the Lord of the Rings - Frodo, Sam, Merry and Pippin - all possess unique traits deserving of respect. In that group, it is Pippin who stands out as most familiar, at least to me.

At the start of the book, Pippin is the youngest of the four hobbits at 28¹³. The hobbits become adults at the age of 33. When the book was written, the time adulthood was reached in England was 21. A simple calculation makes the equivalent age approximately 17/18 years old. In other words, the age of a first year undergraduate. This must be born in mind when considering Pippin. Although, undoubtedly, he is immature compared to Frodo and Sam aged 50 (31) and 38 (24) respectively, and even compared to the 36 (23) year-old Merry, when we compare him with the typical 17 and 18 year-olds today, his immaturity is far less pronounced. It is easy to imagine Pippin on a drunken pub-crawl round Cambridge, or fulfilling foolish pranks during Freshers week in an effort to gain admittance into a drinking society, or even being conned at Freshers fair into getting up at 6 every morning to row on a freezing river. Can we really consider ourselves that much more advanced than Pippin at a similar age?

However, more than his age needs to be taken into account and here the similarities with ourselves in some cases runs even deeper. Barely more than a toddler¹⁴ when his uncle Bilbo disappeared, Pippin never got the chance enjoyed by Frodo and Sam to learn from the master of elven-lore. Great great grandson of the Old Took, son of the Thain of the Shire, it is reasonable to assume that Pippin enjoyed a privileged childhood. Pippin seems to have, to a large extent, taken the education he received rather for granted (not that one can imagine much of it would have been very much use to him during the events of the War of the Ring), preferring to spend his time, in Gandalf's words 'walking with closed ears and mind asleep'¹⁵, with his cousins.

The way his time was spent is in itself a curious circumstance. We are told¹⁶ that, after Bilbo's disappearance, Frodo 'had a good many friends, especially among the younger hobbits (mostly descendants of the Old Took) who had as children been fond of Bilbo and often in and out of Bag End...but his closest friends were Peregrin Took (usually called Pippin), and Merry Brandybuck'. As a choice of friends, this is, on paper, perhaps a little surprising. Even if Frodo

¹³ Born in 1390, the main action of the book begins in September 1418, ending in March 1419 (Shire years).

¹⁴ 11 years-old (7) in 1401.

¹⁵ *The Return of the King, Book Five, The War of the Ring*

¹⁶ *The Fellowship of the Ring, Book One, The Ring Sets Out*

was fond of his younger cousins, the age gap of 22 years in Pippin's case and 14 in Merry's is forbidding. As is the gap of 8 years between Merry and Pippin. In such young children, that is a formidable age gap. The friendship may be said to be even more surprising given that there were no lack of cousins for Frodo to choose. Pippin himself was the youngest of four¹⁷; all of his elder siblings seem more likely candidates for friendship with both Frodo and Merry. And yet, Pippin remained the favourite. One can only assume that his friends saw something more in him than the young, foolish and annoying waste of space that he has all too frequently been dismissed as.

Thus, we start the story, with a young hobbit. A fairly typical immature teenager from a privileged background, whose friends see something more behind the persistently cheerful exterior. Sounds familiar anyone? In everything but - or for some of us including - his reluctance to carry out anything bearing any resemblance to hard work, Pippin seems eerily familiar as the Fresher or the teenager we all once were or at least knew. It was this that from the start attracted me (reading the Lord of the Rings for the first time at 14) to his character. Young and cheerful, fate has destined him from birth to none of the hard manual work that Sam was given and none of the responsibility that Frodo has inherited. Further, his age offers him more excuse than Merry for acting in the way he does, he is not an adult and no one has ever expected him to act anything other than his age.

Whilst these are all excellent excuses and justifications for the Pippin you meet in chapter III of the Fellowship of the Ring, I would have been forced to agree with his critics had Pippin's character not developed throughout the three books. But Pippin does change, he grows up. In fact, his character probably goes through the greatest transformation of any of the characters. The reason I say this is simple. For other characters, the change they go through builds on characteristics they already possess. Pippin is the only one who really develops.

Aragorn is already a King. When he first appears in the Prancing Pony¹⁸, he is a King in disguise. His Ranger mask is good enough that Frodo alone sees a glimmer of Aragorn¹⁹: 'I think you are not really as you choose to look. You began to talk to me like the Bree-folk, but your voice has changed.' and later, 'I think one of his spies would - well, seem fairer and feel fouler'. When required, Strider is almost instantly able to reveal himself as the commanding figure of Aragorn: 'he stood up, and seemed suddenly to grow taller. In his eyes gleamed a light, keen and commanding'.²⁰ Gandalf's change has little connection with himself; a higher power transforms him from Grey to White. Although Gimli and Legolas grow a newfound understanding of their world and the other races who inhabit it, they can hardly be said to change: their personalities stay true from first to last along with most of the characters in the Lord of the Rings.

The hobbits change to a greater degree than most other characters, yet with the exception of Pippin, their potential is visible from early on. Frodo is already mature, waiting for an adventure. The hardship which he endures does much, but it never transforms him from the character you knew him to be. Sam too is, from the start, motivated by little more than his love for his master. He learns about many things during his journey, yet everything you see is there from the beginning. Even Merry, who is often said to be indistinguishable from his closest friend, undergoes nothing like the transformation that Pippin does. Unlike Peregrin, Merry is already an adult at the start of the book. From the start he is just as prepared as Frodo to take the lead. It is

¹⁷ Pearl, born 1375; Pimpernel 1379; and Pervinca 1385.

¹⁸ *The Fellowship of the Ring, Book One, The Ring Sets Out*, Chapter X, Strider

¹⁹ *Ibid*

²⁰ *Ibid*

Merry who has first guessed the true nature of the Ring²¹, and, one suspects, it is he who plans the encounter with Frodo in Crickhollow. Once the first four of the Fellowship start out, he immediately takes the lead through the Old Forest, and only Frodo seems to know more about the world outside the Shire. The Merry we meet at the start of the book is an adult, prepared for adult responsibilities, who finds little difficulty in rising to meet them.

The contrast that we find is that Pippin is a child. During the course of the book he matures, he learns, and he gains the ability to lead others. He starts off as a cheerful and charming, if mildly stubborn young man, with no interest in anything other than his world in the Shire, and develops into a hobbit capable of commanding respect.

The first example I shall use to illustrate this point is Pippin's thirst for knowledge and general intelligence. To say that, at the start of the book, Pippin's level of interest at in the world outside is negligible, is rather an understatement. Similarly, his commonsense leaves a lot to be desired²². This pattern continues for a long time. Despite the dangers that Pippin has faced, he knows (or claims to know²³) no better than to look into the Palantir.

This moment of folly marks a turning point for Pippin. From this moment his commonsense and curiosity increase exponentially. As Gandalf notes: 'the burned hand teaches best. After that advice about fire goes to the heart'. When Pippin pays dearly for his ignorance and foolishness, he certainly learns his lesson in a way that is unparalleled in the Lord of the Rings by many characters (e.g. Boromir, Denethor, Saruman) who would do well to follow his example. Gandalf observes within hours of their departure from Isengard that 'if the giving of information is to be the cure of [Pippin's] inquisitiveness, [Gandalf] shall spend all the rest of [his] days in answering [Pippin]'. When Pippin arrives in Minas Tirith, he is able both to speak wisely to Denethor and to read his character well²⁴.

Pippin's ability to command others appears earlier, but over the course of the book, he develops a new authority. One cannot see him able at the beginning of the book to command the hobbits in the way that he, Merry and Sam are able when ridding the Shire of Sharkey and his men. Although spoken to respectfully by characters such as Farmer Maggot, this deference is unquestionably due to his birth rather than his character. The first hint that their might be something more is in *The Ring Goes South*²⁵ where Pippin is able to convince Elrond mainly through sheer persistence to include him in the Fellowship. This is a fairly impressive feat. Elrond, both wise and commanding is very opposed to Pippin's presence in the company, yet Pippin does not hesitate in standing up to him. I leave it to you to decide whether his attitude was brave or foolish, but it does show that in his own, scrupulously polite way, Pippin is able to defend himself and stand up to authority.

When, later, Pippin and Merry are kidnapped by Uruk-hai²⁶, it is Pippin who shows initiative. He leaves Aragorn his brooch to show both that they were still alive and the path which the Uruk-hai were taking. He then escapes and helps Merry to escape.

²¹ *The Fellowship of the Ring, Book One, The Ring Sets Out, Chapter V, A Conspiracy Unmasked*

²² For example, talking loudly about Mordor whilst he knows that they are hiding from the Black Riders (*Ibid*, Chapter XI, *A Knife in the Dark*).

²³ *The Two Towers, Book Three, The Treason of Isengard, Chapter XI, The Palantir*

²⁴ *Ibid*, Chapter I, *Minas Tirith*

²⁵ *The Fellowship of the Ring, Book Two, The Ring Goes South, Chapter III.*

²⁶ *Ibid*, Chapter III, *The Uruk-hai*

Finally, in Minas Tirith, Pippin has developed sufficient presence to enable him to order full-grown men. Given his childlike appearance to them, and the opposing orders of their lord²⁷, this shows the power which Pippin is by this stage able to command. He has been, as Gandalf will later observe²⁸, trained for leadership, and is now able to equal his friends in the rebellion against Sharkey, and then in the ruling of the Shire.

If the hobbits are the race in Middle Earth who most closely resemble men and women today, Pippin is the most like us. He is probably more close to us than many would like to admit. At the beginning of the book we see the naïve adolescent. A cheerful young man, popular with his friends, from a privileged background, who, over the course of the year, is forced to mature and grow into a responsible adult. Those who dismiss him as annoying, foolish, or merely indistinguishable from his cousin, do both him and themselves an injustice. They miss his development, and perhaps more importantly, they miss a characteristic which we all hope we have, the reason that he develops as he does; his loyalty. Throughout the book, Pippin, although hampered by opposition, foolishness, and sheer terror, keeps going. However selfish and silly Pippin is at the beginning of the book, he won't let Frodo face trouble alone. However terrified, he keeps cheerful for the sake of Merry. And, unlike the men of Gondor who quake and flee at the sight of the Lord of the Nazgul, Pippin doesn't hesitate when turning back would mean certain death for Faramir. In this he shows true bravery; to continue despite everything that is stacked against him for the sake of those who he loves. And because of this, I hope you'll agree that we owe him a bit more respect.

Thea Wilson

²⁷ *Ibid*, Chapter IV, *The Siege of Gondor*

²⁸ *The Return of The King, Book Six, The End of The Third Age, Chapter VII, Homeward Bound*

Men Fear Death as Children Fear to Go Into the Dark

Fear is probably one of the most basic of human 'emotions' and one of the more useful for survival. In *The Lord of the Rings*, fear is focussed around two forces; the Nazgul and the army of the dead. It could be argued that both of these are represented badly in the films.

Firstly the Nazgul: They are described as having 'their power... in terror'.²⁹ In the first film they fulfil this description on most occasions as they come across as unknown, silent and menacing. The attack on the inn (which occurs in both film variants) was considered to be unlikely by Aragorn in the book due to their power lying inn fear. Saying that it is certainly frightening. The attack on Weathertop also shows that action and fear inducement can be combined: except the effect of the fear is not shown by the Hobbits who put up a better fight than they do in the book.

The winged Nazgul are less intimidating than the horsed varieties simply because they are known quantities. They are still fairly intimidating. However at Osgiliath in the second film the reaction of the defenders is not the reaction of troops possessed by a great terror but the reaction of worn out infantry facing air attack. The pursuit across the Pelennor again sees the Nazgul engaging in heavy fighting (dive bombing for want of a better term) as opposed to causing fear and hurling the odd javelin. The assault on Minas Tirith is much the same with them acting as ground support aircraft although I have heard it said that if they can do this so well why not act as air landed troops and seize the heart of the city?! It is also noticeable in the fighting against the Rohirrim that the flight of the majority of their cavalry is due to the fear of their horses (why can't they have acted like this around the Mamuks?) which is certainly consistent with the description in the book. However from all the earlier descriptions there is no reason to believe that this applied to the horses alone. I can't recall if the terror described as afflicting Merry is noticeable or not.³⁰

It could be said that the transformation of the Nazgul from unknown terrors inducing fear in the opposition and occasionally killing to ground support fighters was inevitable given the difficulty of filming fear and terror. This will be looked at in a while but now it is time to move on to the army of the dead.

The popular opinion is that the dead resembled the Pirates of the Caribbean ghost crew. They often appeared as fluorescent forms rather than pale shadows. They are therefore not very frightening and instead of relying on 'no... weapon but fear'³¹ they move terrifically fast (who mentioned jealousy- see my other article for my view of unrealistic mobility) and attack and destroy their opponents as opposed to causing them to flee. There is some indication of the CGI gone mad in the counter-storming of Minas Tirith. However an attempt is made to show the fear that the paths of the dead have on Aragorn and his companions. Until the extended version comes out it is not possible to comment on the over running of the Corsairs of Umbar, which depends on fear.

These failures to portray the fear inspiring forces properly is in part due to the limits of film making. I also wonder if it is due to short cuts. It is true that to convey fear to a film audience is not easy yet it has been done many times. I do not consider myself easily scared but there are certain things that have made me shiver. Many of these were things that relied for their impact on silence, shadow and the unknown. I personally would argue that such things are more scary than the seen and known because much of fear is based on fear of death and death is

²⁹ Strider. *The Fellowship of the Ring*.

³⁰ Editor's note: Merry isn't described as feeling any especial fear in the moment of attacking the Witch-King, but his recollection of it in *The Houses of Healing* is certainly darkened by fear and his arm turning 'cold'.

³¹ *The Last Debate*. *The Return of the King*.

understood, by most, to be silent, dark and unknown. It is also true that death from an unknown cause is more terrifying than death from obvious cause. As the embodiment of death in both cases, the Nazgul and the dead army should be the most terrifying of things. The other things that I find frightening are reality related and therefore not much use in making a fantasy film scary.

I am no expert at film-making but I think that it may have been possible to make both the Nazgul and the dead more frightening for the audience and either way to show the effects of the fear on the characters a lot more. I wonder if a short cut was taken, but also if this is to do with a desire for spectacle. Much of the films rely on spectacle: the swarming dead and Nazgul ground attack fighters certainly constitute such. However, the search for spectacle is often at the expense of the more subtle (and scary) moments³². I also think that, ironically, the spectacle is also at the expense of the epic feel of the book; for a fuller discussion on this, again, see the Mattson article in Anor 30.

The replacement of subtle fear with spectacle is fairly common. Many films that are considered to pass as horror include a lot of ghoulish special effects, yet most people agree that the more effective ones are the ones where much of what happens is unseen. I wonder if the focusing on spectacle and effects is a way of avoiding confronting the fear of death that most people have. It could be argued that such things would be too terrifying for most people in a society that increasingly lacks a purpose to life or any notion of the reasoning for death, or a clear belief in what lies beyond. I would be interested to see what others think but will not develop such theories any more as my understanding of humans is notoriously limited.

Regardless of the reasons, it seems that like many films *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy sacrifices the chance to induce fear for more spectacle when the film already has much of that. Over all this is probably more serious with the army of the dead than the Nazgul as the latter at least have their moments in the film when they are genuinely intimidating. It is possible that this is not possible in the subsequent films as the effect has worn off, but it is also worth noting that no serious attempt is really made.

Jonathan Woolgar

³² See Anor 30, *Flatland in Middle Earth: How Dumbing Down Tolkien Hurts Us All*, Mark Mattson

A Historian's Critique of Tolkien's Middle Earth

The idea for this essay was prompted by one of my admissions interviews back in the summer of this year. Having applied to Pembroke College to read history, I was interviewed by Dr. John Parry, himself a fan of Tolkien. He asked me what I thought of the book from the perspective of a historian. My initial answer – that the account of events centres entirely on the actions of national leaders rather than whole peoples, and is in that respect a-historical – I do not intend to outline here. What concerns me in this essay is a thought that struck me later, as I was reflecting on my performance in the interview, and effectively carries on from the ideas I discussed with Dr. Parry. I must stress, that despite the use of the word 'critique' in the title, I firmly that the ideas I discuss below detract nothing from Tolkien's work. Indeed, had he given details regarding the subject with which I am here concerned, much of the magical, mythological feel of the work may have been lost. I am an ardent fan of Tolkien, and I sincerely hope that the reader will take this essay as it was meant, and not as a criticism of what is, in my opinion, the finest body of work ever written in the English, or indeed any, language.

The major failing, from a historian's point-of-view, of the tales of Middle Earth is the lack of any evidence for the economic substructure of the various societies we encounter in the *Lord of the Rings* &c. Tolkien tells us virtually nothing about how the social production of the various races – most importantly, the production of food – is organised, nor anything about the systems of distribution and exchange that must necessarily exist in conjunction with them. This is a major defect, in that the structure of the economy is the principle factor in determining the character of (real) societies. To quote Marx:

*"In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations... The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society – the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure, and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the social, political and intellectual life processes in general."*³³

Thus the key to understanding the various societies – of Elves and Dwarves as well as of Men – is conspicuously missing from Tolkien's works. What we can guess about the economic organisation of the various peoples must be drawn indirectly from scattered instances – often not obvious ones – in the stories, most especially in *The Lord of the Rings*, and to a lesser extent, *The Hobbit*.

The societies we encounter on our journeys through Eriador (*The Lord of the Rings*, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *Book I*) offer the most clues as to their economic organisation. A key figure in this respect is Farmer Maggot, who, from his very title, gives us some significant clues; yet only 'clues', not hard evidence:

Firstly, Maggot and his family are sustained by their own labours on their farm, thus pointing perhaps to a mainly agrarian economy in the Shire. There is no mention of Maggot being the tenant of any other hobbit, and so we may assume he holds his land as a free-holder, though there is no evidence either way. This may lead to the conclusion that in general – though there are exceptions – Hobbits own portions of land sufficient to sustain themselves and their families. However, evidently some Hobbits are under-provided with land, and are forced to

³³ Marx, *Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, 1859.

subsidise their income through, for example, hiring themselves out as gardeners (I'm thinking here of Sanwise Gamgee).

Two crucial points become obvious at this moment: firstly, that there are inequalities of wealth amongst hobbits, and that these inequalities are great enough for some Hobbits – such as, for example, Bilbo Baggins – to hire less well-off Hobbits on a temporary or permanent basis. Secondly, the economy of the Shire is based upon private property (a point to which we shall return).

However, is the name 'Farmer' Maggot significant? Does this prefix 'farmer' imply that Maggot is *not* in the same economic position as other hobbits – if so, this suggests an economy much more like our own, where a small number of farmers provide the food for the rest of society. Yet this mode of agriculture presupposes a) large farms, b) mechanised production to maximise efficiency, and c) hired labour to assist the farmer in managing and cultivating his land. What we know of Maggot seems to suggest that the last two points are not applicable to him – there is no mention of Hobbits living or working on his farm other than his own family, and certainly no mention of the mechanised production techniques required to produce food in sufficient quantity for farmers to be a minority section of the hobbit population. Indeed, the penultimate chapter of the sixth book of *The Lord of the Rings* – *The Scouring of the Shire* – sharply contrasts the industrial methods brought to the shire by invading Men with the (implied) rusticity of the Hobbits. Furthermore, the weaponry used throughout the stories – swords, spears, mail, metal armour &c – suggest a low (by modern standards) technological base. Thus, we must return to our earlier view of hobbit agriculture.

Some hobbits, however, are not directly engaged in agricultural production. Bilbo, our wealthy aristocrat lording it at Bag-End has already been mentioned. Others must also exist – presumably the *Green Dragon* inn has a full-time innkeeper, and perhaps an extra employee or two. The Hobbits that run the Shire's postal service, the Mayor of Michel Delving, the Bounders and others are presumably too busy with their allotted tasks to find time to grow their own food as well. This suggests that not only is enough agricultural surplus produced to feed those individuals who do not grow their own food, but also that some method of distribution and exchange must exist in order for them to acquire food – and here we can be quite precise about the method of exchange used: money, or rather, gold coins. The two concepts are very different, and Tolkien leaves us unsure as to which exists. Money *represents* values, but has, in itself, no value; gold, on the other hand, is an economic commodity (i.e. it has value), and thus can be swapped for other commodities, such as food. Shaping gold into coins of uniform size simply makes this bartering process easier.

In short, the economy of the Shire seems to be based loosely on the feudal economies of the Middle Ages³⁴, but with one crucial distinction. As mentioned earlier, we find no mention of large landowners renting their land to smaller tenants. Thus, in place of the medieval *vassal*, we find only freeholders. This might go a long way to explaining the absence of any evidence of class struggle in the Shire, and its expression through rebellion against powerful landowning lords that so characterize parts of the Middle Ages. This medieval atmosphere – albeit without the enormous inequalities of wealth and the evidence thereof, viz. castles, monasteries, cathedrals etc. – is conveyed in the images of the Shire presented in Peter Jackson's films, and I think we can take this as being pretty close to how Tolkien imagined it to be.

Marx might point to this lack of class conflict within as the reason for the apparent lack of fundamental change over time, the stability of Hobbit society. Indeed, throughout *The Lord of the Rings*, there is little sense of economic advancement over the ages; in fact there is an all-

³⁴ By 'Middle Ages', I mean the pre-capitalist phase of European history on Earth (roughly from the fall of the Roman Empire to the end of the fifteenth century), not the Second Age of Middle Earth.

pervading sense of slow decay. The Dwarfs, for instance, insist that their work cannot rival that of their fathers, and this theme is reiterated by the Elves, a people diminishing.

What we have said so far about the Shire can be applied without difficulty to Bree, and probably all the lands inhabited by Men in Middle Earth. However, as the *Scouring of the Shire*, and comments by Saruman such as, "the old world will burn in the fires of industry," suggest that things are changing³⁵ – though Tolkien, like Blake before him³⁶, definitely associates industry with the dark forces. To this we shall return in discussing the economic structure of the Dark Lord's domains, but first, let us turn to the Elves.

Analysing the economic structure of Elvish society poses considerably more problems than did that of the Shire. The issue is complicated by the existence of several, separate Elvish peoples, clearly with distinct ways of life, and thus, distinct means of social production. The Elves dwelling at the Last Homely House may well produce food in the same manner as the Hobbits, i.e. through agriculture, since these Elves seem fairly settled, despite the gradual trickle of Elves towards the Havens and away over the Western Seas.

The Elves of Lorien, on the other hand, present serious difficulties. Inhabiting a realm entirely covered in forest, they possess no arable land suitable for the cultivation of crops. A hunter-gatherer economy is the only possible alternative, and yet the Elves of Lorien seem to me to be too numerous – they have sufficient population to inhabit a city – and their culture too advanced (being on a par with that of Rivendell), for this mode of production to sustain them. Inevitably, we are drawn to the conclusion that either the Elves sustain themselves through magic, or that their skill is such that with insufficient means they are able to produce food of sufficient nutritional value, though these two options are by no means mutually exclusive. Interestingly, the only foodstuff that might fulfil this later category is *lembas*, or way-bread, the name of which suggests that it is meant for travelling rather than home consumption.

The realm that presumably has the greatest difficulty in feeding its own population is that of Mordor. The lands immediately to the north and east of the Ered Lithui and the Ephel Duath are entirely useless for cultivation – they are the Dead Marshes, the Dagorlad and the Nindalf: useless for the production of food. In the film *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Boromir describes the lands within Mordor as ashen waste, and although this quote is not to be found in *The Lord of the Rings*, I feel it is concurrent with Tolkien's ideas of Mordor. Moreover, the very concept of growing food seems anathema to the character of the Dark Lord. Whilst Wraiths may not need food, it is certain that the Orcs and Men in his service do, and so whence comes their sustenance? Possibly through the feeding of prisoners to his forces, though this would require so great a number of captives as to be inconceivable, at least until the opening of the War of the Ring. And since Sauron is continually massing forces in preparation for this war, he must require an ever-increasing supply of food.

At this point, my mind is cast back to Richard Overly's ideas on the origins of the Second World War. His argument was that the economic policy of the Nazi state – i.e. the attempt to put Germany on a war footing through massive investment in heavy industry, especially armaments – put such a strain on the German economy that conquest was needed to provide fresh resources and prevent economic collapse. Perhaps this is another reason, along with Sauron's intrinsic evil and his desire for the Ruling Ring, for the outbreak of the war...

If it is, it was purely by accident on the part of Tolkien. "I cordially dislike allegory", he states in the foreword to *The Lord of the Rings*. Indeed it must be stressed again that the ideas I have put forward in this essay are purely speculative, and no doubt Tolkien gave little thought to

³⁵ Though this change seems to be brought about by the conscious decision of leaders of the 'evil' forces, rather than as the product of class struggle, as is the case in our own world.

³⁶ Compare Blake's poem *London*, or the famous quote from *Jerusalem*, "dark Satanic mills":

the issues I have raised. His aim was not to create a 'history' of Middle Earth, but a *mythology*, and mythology has no place for economic analysis!

Ben Shone

Uton Herian Holbytlan!

Or, the Reading of the Lord of the Rings, as seen by Aragorn, with translations into Old English by CS Lewis, corrected vehemently by Matthew Woodcraft. Being mainly a collection of my thoughts, and those of my family and my girlfriend.

The Good

- Impressive and impassioned performances from hobbits, men, elves, dwarves, orcs, and Nazgûl; in particular, the main characters, who all held out brilliantly throughout the 12 hours.
- The bridge of Khazad-dûm – need I say more? I think the huge round of applause was probably as much for Paul Smith's Balrog as it was for Matthew Woodcraft's 'action-Gandalf'.
- The evil minions – especially the orcs, who sounded evil, brutish, cruel and uncultured (but only on-mic). We didn't have a single upper-middle class servant of evil. The Nazgûl were great, particularly the menacing chanting.
- The Pelennor Fields. Everything about the battle was brilliant – the sound effects were atmospheric, the Lord of the Nazgûl was suitably vicious and scary, and Éomer's battlecry ("Death! Death! Death!") repeated by a veritable horde of Rohirrim probably terrified anyone who happened to be coming up the stairs to Starbucks at that point.
- The singing. No-one had anything but good things to say about the singing, particularly the Ents. Also, I quite enjoyed the number of expressions of surprise when I told people that Paul, whom they had previously heard singing *The Last March of the Ents*, is also a countertenor.
- Frodo, Sam and Gollum, and in particular, Sam's monologue in Cirith Ungol.
- Paul's many, many characters, including several moments at which he had conversations with himself.
- The fact that, against all odds, the admin people actually organised the thing in the first place. I still find it amazing that it went off so smoothly, the extended periods of faffing notwithstanding.
- The general feeling of camaraderie. Everyone realised that what we were doing was a) unprecedented; and b) insane, which created a sense of being part of something exciting and slightly unstable, as though a single mistake might send the whole thing collapsing into chaos. This is, I think, the feeling that drives any large-scale production, and as productions go, this was an epic.

The Bad (and yet somehow amusing)

- The occasional sound effect cock-ups – the Green Dragon's indoor fireworks display, for example, and the orcs of Moria suddenly breaking out into unexpected applause.
- Mike fights. When you have a long conversation with someone using the same microphone, it rapidly becomes an exercise in mic control. At the best, you have to be ready to catch the mic as the other person quickly relinquishes it; at the worst, you have to wrench it from their iron grasp, or lean towards a microphone that seems to have been perfectly positioned for a three-foot-five contortionist.
- The fact that I'm *still* singing the songs – actually, that's not such a bad thing, but it may swiftly become irritating for those who have to endure my repeated renditions of *Out of Doubt* and the *Lay of Gil-galad*.

The (Amusingly) Ugly

- Matthew Vernon's eyes, bulging with murderous rage as Gollum sprayed Sam with spittle.
- Naath's frequent streams of invective directed at the CD players, which repeatedly failed to behave as expected.

Tim Kelby



Brian Sibley as Elrond



Gansalf, Samwise, and Boromir's nose.

Comments From the Cast

I just wanted to say a really big thank you to all of you (especially those who were unable to say until the end/pub, and who missed the sobs, goodbyes, thankyou's, more sobs, thank you's and goodbyes, and then a bit more sobbing! ;)) on behalf of the committee! The reading went so well, and sounded amazing. You all worked so hard and it really showed...

Praise you with great praise! <choke> <sob>

PS: See you all next term/time we do something equally silly!

Thea Wilson (Pippin)

Thank you for letting me be part of this wonderful event and all that lead up to it.

Caroline Baker (Merry)

Same here guys, I'm so sorry I couldn't stay until the end, but as it was I didn't get home til 1am! I thought yesterday was amazing, and even if I didn't get to sob with the rest of you, I went away and was despondent as a substitute. Have totally splendiferous summers - I'm bogging off to the airport now to begin mine in earnest ;) - and I fully intend to inflict my presence on hopefully most of you at some point next term... <replace with elvish clever goodbyes>

Clare Judkins (Eowyn)

I just wanted to say a huge and huggy thank you to absolutely everyone (be prepared for what looks like hyperbole but is in fact sincere) - you made the event wonderful, every single one of you. You see, this morning I started singing 'Into the West' in the shower and just couldn't stop myself crying when I thought about what a great day it was - quite honestly one of the best I remember in my life. I then followed it up with the Praisey Halfling Song. But, anyway, let me just say huge thank yous particularly to... Thea, Becky, Anna and Esther, the best committee the world has ever seen and so amazingly dedicated to the project, and wonderful to work with. Edith, for being one of the loveliest people I know and looking after me (and the reading!) all day, and Mark for being so incredibly organised and looking after the scenes so meticulously and not shouting at me when I stole pages of the script! Giu, for being so willing to do anything and everything all day and doing a fantastic job, particularly with the money, and just being lovely to work with. Helen and Sarah for doing a wonderful job on sound - I know it must have been really tiring, and I really admire the way you stuck at it. Caroline, for bringing all that wonderful food and being so generous, kind and enthusiastic all the time, from beginning to end. Absolutely all the readers, and of course the singers (sorry for not naming everyone!) - there wasn't a single person who didn't do a fantastic job, and you all made the reading come alive. I'll never be able to read the book or see the films without thinking of all of you. And, perhaps most importantly, thank you to our little lucky charm, Emily, who was extremely enthusiastic, made more money for us than anyone else, and was great fun to hang out with all day. Here's to our encore!

Pip Steele (Arwen, Head of Admin)

Thank you all so much for helping to make the reading go so well and for all the hard work that you've put in over the last few months.

Becky Corlett (Narrator)

Well done everyone, glad you all had a great time. I shall mention the last line I read as Gamling: "The King returns" whipping my sword from the scabbard, and leaving the blade inside - not a sight to inspire the men.

Lawrence Davis (Many parts!)

(More) hugs to everyone. A great success. Something equally silly? We could even write something ourselves, tapping the talent that appears for Anor each term :) It'd probably be humorous and short, but... that's GOOD, right?

Jack Vickeridge (Butterbur)

Something equally silly? Well it seems to me that we simply HAVE to do either the monstrous 28 hour rendition of the Silmarillion OR that obnoxious radio rendition of the Hobbit where we all have to pronounce it "Gandaahhlf". It was marvellous fun yesterday, chaps. Sorry I missed the sobbing and choking... although the only things I can picture on those words are Thea without her contact and Gollum v Sam - the final showdown! It was marvellous, everyone.

Nick Price (Faramir-the-Theoden-impersonator)

It would be completely out of character of me to say anything positive (I'm the type of person who thinks the Spartans could have done better in the Tearless Battle of 368 B.C.) but I will go so far as to say that over all I enjoyed myself, and will be happy to do the repeat if it is decided upon.

Jonathan Woolgar (Mouth of Sauron)

I've done the odd theatrical thing before and never felt like this afterwards. I can't get bits of LOTR out of my head. Maybe I'm just having difficulty letting go of Treebeard and Gollum. Maybe it's partly because there are a fair few people from the Readthrough who I may not see again (or at least, have just gone away for the summer). Maybe it's because we did a great thing together, that was transient, and is now gone, save in our memories. I know we weren't allowed to record it, but I'd give anything to have had a recording. Not necessarily to ever really listen to, but to have as a concrete reminder that we actually *did* it.

Matthew Vernon (Gollum, Treebeard)

Aragorn blah blah blah... AND I WILL HAVE MY REVENGE! And lots of sniggering. How about: Arghhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh how does this thing work again? That isn't the right track! Stupid machine!

Naath (Many parts, and diligent sound person!)

Repeat performance? Yes, yes, yes! (listening to the tapes again)

Colin Watson (Eomer)

Youngest Woodcraft expresses [1] his gratitude that his first introduction to Tolkien's art should be in such a virtuous adaptation. -M- [1] He actually said 'nga'. I am interpreting.

Matthew Woodcraft (Gandalf)

An Elf's Eye View Memories of the Reading



Some of Pip's pictures, from top left: Boromir asleep, Aragorn, Samwise and Frodo in Bree, Caroline's stunning cake, and Faramir, also asleep (must be genetic).

Turning up at the back entrance of Borders at 8.20am, I was glad to see some friendly and punctual faces already waiting there, and even more glad when I discovered all the supplies that Caroline had brought - crates of stuff, so much food that we could have fed the five thousand without a miracle!

So this was it, the big day, the day we would find out if all our efforts would bear the fruits of success. Or something. Anyway, I was excited, and so was everyone I came across (many of whom arrived surprisingly early, breathing enthusiasm). We did the setting up, established our area of Borders (with only a little 'Border' dispute - don't groan!... I feel like Frankie Howard now...) and we were off. There were badges for all, and additional fluffly for committee and admin people (I was the only one with a name badge and both colour fluffies!) - everyone knew who they were and where they were meant to be, and if they didn't then my admin team was ready with the information...

To be fair, it was almost as smooth-running as I make it sound. Aside from the odd hitch (which tended to be circumstantial - no-one was at fault), the reading went along just as it should - Frodo got his ring, went on an adventure, and destroyed it, and in the end peace came to Middle Earth (and Middle Borders, when we left, I expect!).

I have so many wonderful memories of the day... taking pictures of sleeping hard-partiers worn out by their May Weeks, bits of the reading where you couldn't help but see a double

entendre, being helped by our lucky charm, Emily, meeting Brian Sibley (with much accompanying squee-ing), getting everyone to sign my programme, and just the sheer camaraderie that was shared by all. Of course, it was hard and very tiring, but we all got through it (I couldn't have done it without my back-up admin people keeping me sane all day!), and we gave our audience a good time.

At the end we gathered round the piano for Anna to sing 'Into the West', and as we joined in, the emotion flooded out - there were certainly tears in my eyes, and I could see a fair few others getting rather weepy around me. I'm afraid I can't do justice to the emotion of those moments in words, but I know that I'll always carry the memory in my heart - the joint effort, the spirit of togetherness, the friendship that I experienced that day will stay with me for life. At the pub, everyone was rather elated, drunk on the excitement of the day rather than alcohol, and when it was time to say "farewell" we were reluctant to do it. But in the end we sundered our fellowship on the street corner, said our goodbyes and went our separate ways. And yet I know we shall all meet again.

Pip Steele

The Road Goes Ever On

Thoughts from a Gamgee on his Journey

Where to begin? There's an awful lot to be said, and nowhere near the time nor space to say it. But here are some things that I think should be set down, lest we forget them...

In Rehearsal:

- ❖ The many times Becky was thrown off her opening narrator's speech in rehearsal by a chorus of the theme from 'The Archers' – and the beautiful way that she worked her words into the music we had on the day.
- ❖ The first time we did the Watcher in the Water sequence – and Emily leaping out of her skin as Frodo was grabbed!
- ❖ Faramir's 'I am the Captain of the 2.1', and Byronic exit.
- ❖ Eomer's 'I serve none but the dark... er...'
- ❖ A comment made to me on the day of the full rehearsal, when I was keeping tabs on which scene we were in on the wipe board in the Video Room – as I marked our progress into Isengard, I was told by Matthew Woodcraft 'Of course we're in ROTK – you've already done Mt. Doom!'
- ❖ The state of said wipe board as I returned during the day. Sadly, someone had photographic evidence.
- ❖ What was done to my beautiful notices! Including the correction of 'Please return your badges' to 'badgers' by certain heirs of Isildur...
- ❖ The cry, when we began rehearsing scene 4 (Gandalf expositos to Frodo for half an hour) of 'we've done this scene before' (see silly sketches).
- ❖ The cry of 'biscuits!' rather than 'Death!'
- ❖ 'He's fallen in the water...'
- ❖ Frodo's decline into Gollum-ness before he had even left the Shire ('Wake up, Hobbitses!'). Sam and Pippin had hysterics.
- ❖ The Marvellous Rotating Legolas!
- ❖ My slightly bruised arm after the day (thank you, Gollum!), and narrow avoidance of saying 'Po-ta-toes' at such a speed as to encourage silly songs...

On the Day:

- ❖ The Orodruin rumble – it's the new birds.
- ❖ Orcs at the Grey Havens, and fireworks in the Green Dragon, complete with crowd going 'oohh'.
- ❖ Brian Sibley's beautiful speech made in the pause between Fellowship and The Two Towers – where he said that he had memories from the original adaptation, and from the films, and that he was now laying down new memories of us doing the reading, and how he loved the way we were bringing it to life.
- ❖ The splendour of the Balrog and Shelob. It was so much easier stabbing a spider that was actually bubbling!
- ❖ The vitamin-pot wrack...
- ❖ The 'shaving' of the Shire.
- ❖ The Pelennor Fields. Superb. Singing, acting, sound effects. Flawless.
- ❖ The bird-warbler – which was more like someone mimicing a bird, if you understand me.

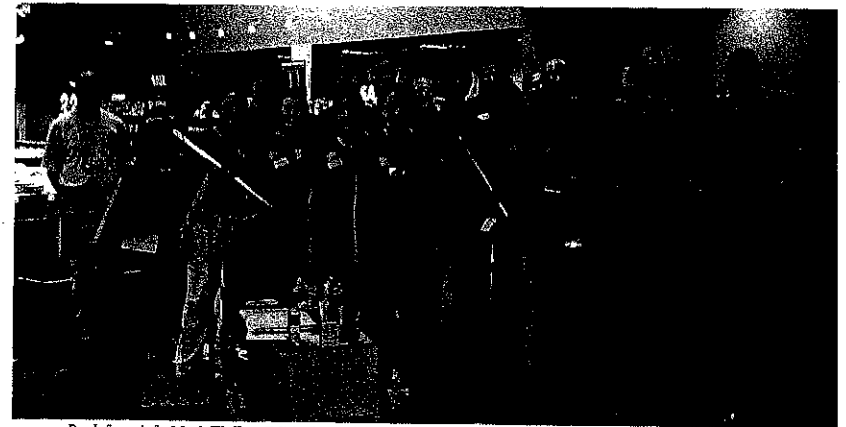
- ❖ Manic shear-use.
- ❖ The singing, the vigour, life and enthusiasm of the whole cast.
- ❖ The reaction of Starbucks and Borders – both of whom thoroughly enjoyed it, and said they'd be happy for us to do such madness again. And, of course, the invitation from Brian Sibley to do it all again next August at Tolkien 2005.

Then there were the manic committee meetings, the casting and organising, the teary farewells, the sheer experience of it all... By the end of it all, as I sat in the car wending my way home, I felt as though I had been to Mordor, but come back with prizes richer than Galadriel's gifts: friends and an experience to last me a lifetime. One to be recorded, and told to young hobbits out of a red book.

I looked on during the day, and as I was sitting there in a brief pause between duties and acting I thought suddenly to myself; 'We're insane. Whatever possessed us to do this?'

But we did it. And I think we did Tolkien proud.

Anna Slack



*Back from left: Mark Waller, Edith, Brian Sibley, Tim Kelby, Jonathan Woolgar, Nick Taylor, Matthew Vernon, Nick Price, Matthew Reid, Matthew Woodcraft, Colin Watson, Paul Smith
Middle: Giulia Slack, Thea Wilson, Anna Slack, Richard Smith, Pip Steele, Helen Cousins, Sarah Arnold
Front: Becky Corlett, Caroline Baker, Sharmaine Seneviratne, Esther Miller, Emily Baker*



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12th November 2004

Dear Ms Slack

Thank you so much for the generous donation of £409 towards the Neptune Coastline Campaign. It sounds like you had fun in raising the money. I wish we had known about it!

We are very lucky to enjoy such support from all sorts of individuals and organisations and clearly the Tolkien Society are particularly creative!

Your donation will indeed make a significant difference to our work. At the moment our priorities are Coastal Management and re-alignment and working with natural processes in order to assist coastal change. We are also hoping to make an exciting acquisition of Devon coastline in 2005, for which we will launch an appeal in January.

Thanks again for the support and please pass on our thanks to the other members of your group.

Yours sincerely

Johanna Lovesey
Special Appeals Manager

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The Cambridge Tolkien Society (Minas Tirith) is a society registered with the University (more often than not!), whose aim is to further interest in the life and works of the late Professor J.R.R. Tolkien CBE. Meetings are held weekly during Full Term. Its magazine *Anor* is published fitfully, often when a full moon assists with the madness.

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