

# The Benevolent Order of Scurrilious Monks

## Abbot's Report

### Summer Solstice, 2009

#### Brother Reluctant Builds a Giant Dragon!!

Jack Akers, of Grey Fox Pottery, sells T shirts and mugs for the Arizona Renaissance Festival. After admiring Brother Can-You-Spare-a-Dime's Corkscrew Slides at the Sterling and/or The Georgia Renaissance Faire, he



decided to build one of his own in Arizona. It ended up costing him a hundred grand. The most impressive part of the Arizona corkscrew slide is the remarkably attractive dragon above the entrance. Our own Brother



Reluctant (Richard Taecker) designed and built the dragon. He has proven, yet again, that he's not just a guy

who dresses people up to take their pictures. Pictured with Brother Reluctant is his friend Terry Kempf who helped with the welding and technical details. Brother Reluctant has also provided us with a link to a website where they sell nice monk's robes:

<http://www.darknightarmoury.com/p-891-monks-robe-with-hood.aspx>

#### Brother Bothered Is Still Dropping Smart Bombs!!

Brother Bothered (Clark Orwick) created the Original Ded Bob show. It was so popular that he was able to franchise the operation. There are a few different Ded Bobs touring the renaissance festivals now. This leaves Clark with more time to pursue a secondary career in



journalism. Brother Bothered spends hours and hours searching remote corners of the Internet for obscure truths so that the rest of us don't have to. When he finds interesting and succulent tidbits of information, he passes them on to the rest of us via his E newsletter, *Smartbombs*. The *Smartbombs* newsletters direct us to countless news stories that corporate media moguls seemingly don't want us to know about. A favorite subject heading is "wars are for profit." Again and again, Brother Bothered has directed us to stories which explain the true anatomy of war. We have learned which corporations are reaping huge windfall profits and how they manage to perpetuate murder and killing in order to

maintain and increase their wealth and power. Recent *Smartbombs* have updated us on continuing private investigations of the crimes committed on September 11, 2001. There are currently more than 700 architects and structural engineers who insist that the three New York City skyscrapers could not have collapsed due to fires caused by passenger airliners crashing into them. They were all destroyed by carefully placed explosive charges. *Smartbombs* have provided links to stories and videos that help to explain the recent financial meltdown and who has profited from it. *Smartbombs* keep us updated on scientific breakthroughs in the fields of renewable energy and global sustainability. Recently, a battery has been developed that has 10 times the storage capacity of any battery currently available. Since this opens the door for household production and storage of electricity worldwide, one might think that we would hear about it on the network's evening news programs. None of them felt that the story was even worth a mention! Another *Smartbomb* led us to a video of an interview with Russ Baker who wrote a book about the Bushes entitled *Family of Secrets*. The author reveals that then covert CIA operative George Bush Sr. was in Dallas on the day of the Kennedy assassination. *Smartbombs* also link us to interesting developments in the worlds of art, entertainment, humor and music. All of this information should be available to us in newspapers and on television and on the radio but almost none of it is. Clark would like to increase the circulation of his newsletter. If you have not yet subscribed (its free) go here and sign up.

<http://www.dedbob.com/smartbombs/index.htm>

In other related DedBob news, Brother Bothered would like to sell his house in Toon Town, near the Texas Renaissance Festival. Toon Town is the largest community of renaissance festival professionals on earth. Clark's house is arguably one of the nicest on Renfaire Drive. Many of us have attended parties there. Its next door to Nuevo Chile, right in the heart of the action. The bidding starts at a paltry One Hundred Grand, about the cost of a fancy corkscrew slide.

## A Fabulous Facebook Find: Brother Father Wacky Lives!!!

None of us had heard from Brother Father Wacky (James Hatley) in years. We first met him at the Georgia Renaissance Faire where he was manufacturing and marketing whimsical wooden toys, most famously, mooses. His *Abbot's Reports* had been coming back

marked "return to sender" for quite some time. Brother Billious (Bill Jezzard) reported that Brother Father Wacky was dead. Brother Mama Woman (Toni Lamberti) believed the reports and posted pictures on a Facebook site devoted to dead rennies. (The Dead Wren Singing and Dancing Society.) A few weeks ago, Brother Father Wacky showed up again at the Georgia Renaissance Faire. He was not dead at all. Even more recently, he showed up on Facebook, looking a little bit like Santa Claus. The reincarnation of our long lost friend and brother was met with great rejoicing. Hallelujah! He is risen!



Over the past year or two, Facebook, an Internet social networking site, has been very beneficial to the renaissance festival community. Our community is uncommon in that its members do not live in the same town, state or sometimes, not even in the same country. We are spread out across the globe. Facebook has become our local neighborhood tavern, newspaper, bulletin board and town hall. It is also becoming the



repository for many of our stories, histories, pictures and videos. Facebook is by no means without foibles. It is doubtlessly a treasure trove of information that is being constantly mined by the FBI, CIA and NSA. It can be a tricky program to learn. As with most computer programs, there is a lot more to it than most of us actually use. Each of us learns and uses the parts that interest us and try to ignore the rest. The greatest Facebook pitfall is its highly addictive nature. Many of us have logged in for a minute or two to check up on our friends and neighbors only to find ourselves, several hours later, wondering where the day has gone. We run into friends we have not heard from in years. We end up looking at web sites and videos that our friends have

recommended. Our friends display albums of photos from twenty years ago and we have to view and remark upon every picture. No where else is our collective history depicted, discussed and displayed so comprehensively. In times of disaster and tragedy, our community comes together to mourn and commiserate in a way that was heretofore impossible. This was most recently exemplified with the death of our dear friend Brother Pompadour. Our Abbot received an early morning phone call from Brother Charles (Chuck Dixon) informing him of the tragic news from the other side of the world. The news was posted on Facebook within minutes. Within a couple of hours, the news had traveled around the world a half a dozen times and come back again. Nobody knew how many friends Dennis Cooper had or how much he had meant to so many people until we all came together on his Facebook page to console each other. Yes, Facebook can be difficult and annoying. But sometimes, Facebook is valuable and magnificent. Of course, it all depends upon who your friends are. Scurrilious Monks who join Facebook are advised to request David Roe as a Facebook friend. He is the gatekeeper who can let you into the secret BOOSM Facebook group.

## Two More Monks Kick Buckets

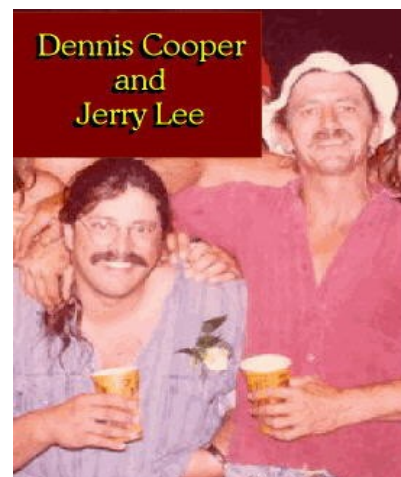
In 1981, not far from the Colorado Renaissance Faire, Brother Pompadour (Dennis Cooper) pawned our Abbot's high school class ring to finance the publication of our first pile of indulgences. As the gold exchanged hands,



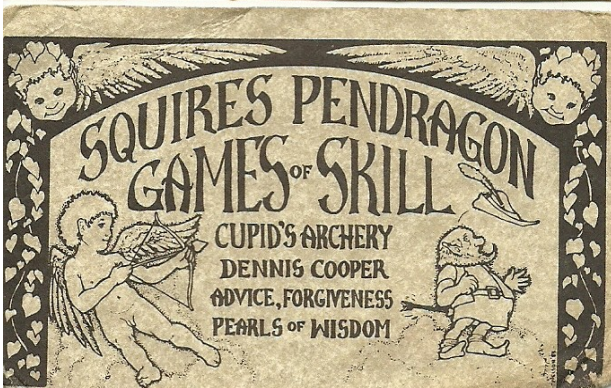
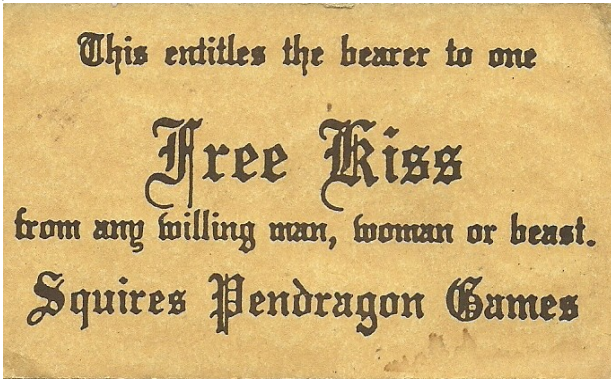
we went into the business of forgiving sins and The Benevolent Order's name appeared in print for the first time. Without our co founder, Brother Pompadour, The Benevolent Order of Scurrilious Monks might have only been an amusing phrase buried amidst a huge pile of faded memories.

Dennis was the oldest of five children born to deaf parents. He teased and tormented his younger siblings mercilessly. But there was always humor. There was always joking. There was always laughter. He was not often chastised or punished if he got a bit too mean because *his parents couldn't hear the terrible things he was saying*. Dennis grew up uncensored. Consequently, throughout the rest of his life, Dennis was likely to say almost any gosh darned thing. He was sometimes offensive. He was always out to see who's goat he could get. He sometimes hurt people's feelings. Please forgive the forger. He was a victim of his own circumstances. But it was all in good fun.

Fun was the name of the game. Fun and Games. In 1982, Brother Bonehead (Norman Wylde) left the world of Renaissance Faires to become a Harley Davidson dealer. Brother Pompadour inherited the Wylde Gaming Corporation which, at the time, wasn't really much of boon. It consisted of several games at Scarborough Faire near Waxahachie Texas. Scarborough Faire had just had rain on 16 of 19 days of its opening season. But Dennis started growing the empire by buying the archery concession. After borrowing three hundred bucks from Brother Costello (David Roe) to buy arrows, the games were afoot. DR says that Dennis paid him back at the end of the first day and Squires Pendragon Games more or less provided Dennis with a living for the rest of his life.



There are many who might look down their noses at the festival games. But there are even more who run from the front gate straight to the Gaming Glenn because that's what they love best about the Renaissance Faire. Dennis ran the games well and he made sure that they were fun. He had the big smile and the clever patter. He hired energetic employees and he trained them well. He put money back into the business. All of the signs were professionally painted and all of the target boards got replaced when they'd been chewed up by the knives and axes. He had hats and T shirts printed for his employees and friends. Eventually, after the indulgences ran out, he even started buying more attractive prizes. This brings us to the matter of the Free Kiss tickets. In all fairness, The Free Kiss coupon was first introduced by Brother Bonehead. But his were rudimentary. "Free Kiss" scrawled on a piece of paper and reproduced on the library copy machine along with the "free game" and "be in the parade" tickets. Dennis took the Free Kiss to a new level. They were printed on business cards and they said, "This entitles the bearer to one FREE KISS from



any willing man, woman or beast. Squires Pendragon Games." Later editions were two sided with Jim Nelson art on the back. Nothing did more to promote Romance at the renaissance faires than Free Kiss tickets. Love was in the air. Dennis could be charming and he knew how to show a girl a good time. As a self proclaimed "serial monogamist," Dennis had a few fabulous

girlfriends and in the end, a wonderful, forgiving wife.

The gaming business was never trouble free. There were always problems with employees, problems with irate non winning patrons, problems with insurance people and state and local officials and permits and safety regulations. There were some fires, several breakdowns, a few minor injuries, some lawsuits. A few times, festival owners simply stole the games from Dennis so that they could keep all of the profits for themselves. They could never run them as well. Some of them ran them into the ground.

Dennis was successful enough to be able to travel the world and he met his wife Kumruen in Thailand in 1999.



In her rural hometown of Surin, Dennis had a house built for his new Mother-in-law and another one for himself, his wife, and their adopted son Tuntan Jazzbo Cooper. Jazzbo is now 3. In spring 2009, Dennis' health finally gave out. Lisa Farrell and her husband Ob traveled to Thailand to be with Dennis and his wife in the hospital. Dennis had chosen to stop all treatments. He was in good spirits for a day or two but as his organs shut down, he went in and out of consciousness until he died peacefully in the Bangkok hospital. When Lisa and Ob traveled to Surin for the funeral, they arrived to a huge tumultuous crowd of mourners. The 'ranch' in Surin is a lot like a full-time community center for his wife's extended family and for everyone else in the village as well. They were soon immersed in a week-long full-on Buddhist wake/funeral/parade and ultimately a beautiful outdoor cremation. There were over five hundred people in attendance at his local Buddhist Temple [Wat]. At one point, late in the day as the fire roared, weenies were handed out and eaten by onlookers. Buddhist Monks

poured a final cup of Thai whiskey on the pyre to help free Brother Pompadour's spirit.

There are those who will tell you that Dennis died as a result of running his Harley Davidson into a cow. There is some truth in that. The collision happened and it did put him in the hospital but it wasn't really what killed him. Dennis and his two biological brothers, Barney and Billy, all had weak livers and a love of alcohol. It was a fatal combination for all three of them. Dennis was sober for the last two years of his life but it was too little, too late. Although his health was failing, it was a pleasant change for many of us to spend time with Dennis when he wasn't drunk. He was so much easier to get along with. We are inclined to say that he mellowed in his old age but he never really made it to old age. Dennis died on May 31 at the age of 50.

Dennis set new standards for the Renaissance Festival gaming industry. Several others, admiring his success,



went on to create their own gaming empires. One of them, Ras Brother Poppa, (Jerry Lee) died three months before Dennis did. Jerry Lee passed away Wednesday, February 18, 2009 at age 60. Ras Brother Poppa's gaming empire was only one of his many businesses enterprises. Along with Brother Can-You-Spare-a-Dime



(Ray St. Louis) and Brother Oh, Brother, (David Ballard) Ras Brother Poppa was one of the founders of The Blue Moon Monastery and Primate Research Center in Alachua, Florida. Brother Can-You-Spare-a-Dime wrote

a beautiful eulogy for Jerry Lee. Our Abbot, in a misguided attempt to save space, butchered the carefully crafted literature and he plopped the remains here, in this *Abbot's Report*:

Let us not observe a moment of silence for Jerry Lee. If there was anything that my longtime friend and land partner hated, it was silence, the moment when the grand show of life came to a grinding halt. Rather, let us prepare for the next act, the next bit of comic shtick, the next big trick to wow the crowd. Start big, finish big, keep them interested in between. These were the words Jerry Lee lived by. He was the consummate showman – Jerry Lee the Monkey Man; Alphie the Friendly Ape; Poppa Dollar of the Old West Medicine Show; Tico Manley; Ras Poppa of the Traveling Gypsy Show. Jerry was part performing artist, part poet, part ringleader and all clown. He was the trickster, the huckster, the snake oil salesman, the teller of tales. He was one of the world's foremost advocates of clown terrorism – those random acts of inappropriate frivolity perpetrated by hit-and-run militant humorists. One way of looking at the life of Jerry Lee would be to see it as a 6-decade escape from normalcy. Jerry didn't do normal. He did unusual, surprising, astonishing, challenging, but not normal. He lived for the exhilaration of the moment. Life was a rush, a madcap race to the finish punctuated with magic, theater, and spectacular feats of daring-do, tricks with whips, balloon animals, eating fire and lying on prickly beds of nails. The world was Jerry's stage. He performed at fairs and festivals all over the United States. He organized balloon lift-offs in his adopted home of Costa Rica. He, along with various assortments of friends, staged impromptu street circus shows in out-of-the-way Costa Rican villages. When they came to get Jerry's body, we sent him off with his clown nose on, a beer under his arm and a cigarette tucked behind his ear. And



we all wore our clown noses as well and hummed circus tunes on kazoos. So here's to Jerry Lee, who followed his own path. He was the last of the great beatnik vaudevillian nonconformists.