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Unreviewed Mixed Matters Article:

Conference Review: The 1st Annual Seminar of Experimental Archaeology in Norway

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Recent years have shown an upsurge of activities related to experimental archaeology in Norway. The time was therefore ripe to arrange a meeting (7 May 2011) and there was talk of forming a formal network for experimental archaeology in Norway. The previous meeting of the sort was in 2005, and the idea of a seminar was well received.

Twenty participants gathered at Hringariki museum at Hønefoss in Eastern Norway. The day was divided into three parts: Part One consisted of lectures on methodology by Tine Schenck, Lars Erik Narmo and Jørgen Bøckman, who discussed three different angles into experimental archaeology (scientific, tentative and learning by doing). Part Two continued with lectures on experiments with different aspects of material culture: Hans Johnny Hansen gave a talk on the technology of pattern welding in swords from the Viking Age, whereas Petter Snekkestad related the results of acoustic measurements in medieval stone churches. Bjørn Are Stølen discussed how knowledge of the fighting system dubbed HEMA (Historical European Martial Arts) can add to our knowledge both of martial arts and related technology. Part Three consisted of demonstrations of HEMA by Bjørn Are Stølen, birch bark tar distillation by Grethe Moéll Pedersen, grinding of slate arrowpoints by Lotte Eigeland and reed basketry by Tine Schenck.

The day was rounded off with a constitutional meeting for the Norsk Forum for Eksperimentell Arkeologi [the Norwegian Forum for Experimental Archaeology], and an annual seminar was decided on. A committee of five volunteered to work towards the next seminar, which will also be held at Hringariki in September 2012, and will be expanded to two days – one day of lectures and one day of demonstrations in the presence of museum visitors.

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