

## Reconstructing our past

Today, history is more and more becoming an important part of many people's life all over the world. The immense number of re-enactment groups is a clear sign of the importance of history and it is to be noticed that it is the laymen who is running this kind of activities, more then the museums or the antiquarian establishment.

But it would be misleading to think that the accuracy and the level of authenticity among these groups or persons is very low, just depending on the fact that they are laymen. On the contrary, I would strongly argue that many of them are far more skilled in historical matters than any schooled man or woman. Not at least when it comes to the question of recreating the past, from building houses to making copies of jewellery or weapons. The normal archaeologist looks at the rusty artefacts and draws conclusions, very seldom he tries to verify his thesis by making practical experiments.



But this is exactly what all these re-enactment groups are doing. One of the most skilful persons I have come across dealing with manufacturing of Viking Age artefacts is Craig Sitch. Living in Australia, far from the Viking homelands, he makes some of the best copies of Viking Age swords I have ever come across. The swords are actually masterpieces of Viking Age swords, and I am pretty sure that most of my colleges among the archaeologist would agree.

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