

New Merchant Coordinator Signs On

Following several staffing changes since the end of the 2025 Faire Season, Rachel Harrison has stepped into the roles of Operations Manager and Merchant Coordinator for the Faire and Festivals of Mt. Hope. A veteran of the early days of the PA Renaissance Faire (1986-1997) and the interactive theatrical offerings of the Grubb Mansion (1990-1997), Rachel is pleased to be back in her old stomping grounds serving in a new capacity. She dove into the work at hand several weeks ago, working remotely before relocating back to Lancaster County on April 16, and is pushing hard to catch up on distributing contracts and getting things up and running for the many Merchants of the shire.

While you may have already received communication from either Rachel or Bri Miller regarding your contracts and other matters that need attention, please be on the lookout in the coming week for your 2026 Season Contracts. Rachel is available for a quick conversation, as time allows, but she asks that you hold off on “when am i getting a contract” calls and emails, unless you have pressing or pertinent information to relay. She and Bri Miller are moving as quickly as possible to get everyone their paperwork, and they both greatly appreciate your patience with the staffing changes and new software learning period that have leant to the delay in contracting.

*Emails may be directed to R.Harrison@parenfaire.com *

Contracts are Coming

Yes, it's true. Look for them in the coming week!

As each Exhibit A (the comprehensive list of your services and wares) is reviewed and approved, the Merchant Coordinator is painstakingly combing through all required documentation before generating each individual contract. Your contract will be emailed to you for signature when all listed items are on file.

- Current and updated **Certificate of Insurance (COI)** naming Mazza Vineyards Inc. as additionally insured with the proper limits.
- Current **PA State Sales Tax License** supported by a **screenshot** of the license listing on the Open Data Portal for PA State Sales Tax
- **Approved Exhibit A**
- Updated list of the Merchant's Festival participation.

Season 46 Opens with FlavorFest

Time to refresh and prepare for the first festival of the year

FlavorFest, Pennsylvania's Premiere Wine Event, takes place on May 23-24, 2026. Spring has sprung, and we're gearing up for the 2026 festival season here at Mt. Hope. The shire is sure to be abuzz with activity and preparation for the first festival-goers of the year.



Merchants with permanent physical structures, please be reminded, whether you are participating in this event or not, your booth space needs to be freshened up and made guest-ready. Please set aside the time and resources you'll need to spruce up your exterior area for the festival before we open the gates on May 23.

A (Somewhat) Brief & Cheeky Bio of Rachel Harrison

Operations Manager & Merchant Coordinator

Before she served over a decade as the Resident Production Stage Manager for American Stage Theatre in St Petersburg, Florida...

Before she worked more than half a decade with the Bradenton Area Convention Center or traveled the Americas and Europe as a technician on several professional theatrical tours...

Before she became a veteran of many a Renaissance Faire and Festival - from PARF to FLARF to BARF, from Sterling to Arizona and North Carolina, whether as pretzel vendor or gamer or food booth manager, and in roles as Production and Stage Manager to Assistant Entertainment Director

In the days of yore, and Mt. Hope lore, when the Human Chess Match was fought on a field of sand and grass squares, and washing well wenches cavorted in a small water pit at the Boarshead Inn. When only brave and intrepid explorers could find Endgame stage tucked at the far end of the shire behind a swell of land; and water, Pepsi, apple cider and lemonade or iced tea were the only libations to be quaffed.

Before highfalls from the Boarshead, and fireballs at Bosworth Field, before flush privies and in the days of Ye Olde Worlde Inn... in those days... a youthful Rachel Harrison cut her teeth in her first job running pretzels and Italian ice to refill the red and white striped carts of the shire.

Years, nay decades, hence, Rachel returns to Mt. Hope, and the Pennsylvania Renaissance Faire as Operations Manager and Merchant Coordinator. Full circle, in a wondrous journey through life and adventure, this dyed in the wool Manheim Central Baron comes home to find her little faire of yesteryear has grown in size and scale, in scope and in grandeur!

Rachel is looking forward rediscovering the magic and merriment, commitment and community that brings Mt. Hope to life every season.

2026 Faire Scenario & Weekend Themes

Season Scenario & Weekend Themes Published

The year is 1567 and Queen Elizabeth is becoming more beloved by her people with each passing year. Having heard her father, Henry VIII, spin many tales about Mount Hope, with all its joys and perils, she wishes to experience it for herself and has decided to make a visit to the Shire. With her, she brings her favored Ladies, Sir Walter Raleigh, and her most favorite courtier, the dashing Robert Dudley.

Mount Hope is wild with excitement to welcome Elizabeth and her Court to the Shire. This *is* the place that has ranked foremost in royal hearts for generations, afterall. Where better to relieve the Queen of a burden that surely weighs on her heart and mind? But, what burden you may wonder? Why, the burden of Marriage, of course. Who shall be her consort? Word across the Kingdom is that Robert Dudley is vying for her hand, though not everyone is enamoured of that idea.

Of course, the good people of Mt. Hope know there could be no finer choice than for the Her Royal Majesty to marry a good stout Englishman from the best Shire in the land. And so, in true Mount Hope fashion, candidates are put forward, choices are made, sides are taken, and conflicts and hijinks ensue. Mount Hope will ever be Mount Hope.

Long may She reign, in Majesty glorious, ever victorious - God save the Queen!

Weekend Themes

Weekend One - August 15-16
Fairies and Fantasy

Weekend Two - August 22-23
Legends of the Seas

Weekend Three - August 29-30
Heroes & Villains

Weekend Four - September 5-6
Viking Weekend

Weekend Five - September 12-13
Wizarding Weekend

Weekend Six - September 19-22
Shamrocks & Shenanigans

Weekend Seven - September 26-27
OktoberFest

Weekend Eight - October 3-4
Time Travellers

Weekend Nine - October 10-11
Hallowe'en Days & Spooky Knights: The conjuring of Scratchy

Weekend Ten - October 17-18
Hallowe'en Days & Spooky Knights: The Silence of Mt. Hope

Weekend Eleven - October 24-25
Hallowe'en days & Spooky Knights: 28 Days Thither

