



It's that time of year again when those offspring of the trolls, the yulelads, roam the land with their theft and disturbance, joined by their cat, who eats those wearing last year's clothing fashions.

Yet, it's also a season to be thankful. The sun's retreat is reversed, and is beginning to triumph over darkness again.



We at Hurstwic are thankful for many things this season, but especially for our worthy friends and allies, who allowed us to accomplish some incredible things this year.



In July, we might have done our craziest experiment to date. With the cooperation of the [National Museum of Iceland, Eiríksstaðir](#), and the [Fire Protection Engineering Department of WPI](#), we conducted a series of tests using experimental archaeology to explore the commonly used Viking-age battle tactic of attacking a man by burning him in his longhouse. It takes a village to raise a child, and it takes a village of experts to make such a grand and elaborate experiment. To conduct the test, we built a Viking house, instrumented it, and burned it. We had numerous experts in a variety of fields joining in these experiments at our [fire festival](#), and we are grateful for their efforts. [[preliminary report video](#)]







As part of the events surrounding our fire festival, we held a panel discussion at the [National Museum of Iceland](#) on the topic of researching Vikings. Each of the panelists has made significant contributions in Viking studies, but each has approached their studies from different angles. It was an entertaining and insightful discussion, both amongst the panelists, and with the audience. It was an immense honor to be among these great people. [\[link to video\]](#)



In September, we visited [Odin's Warrior Tribe](#) for another multi-day glíma training event at their Viking camp in Maryland. In addition to the glíma training, there were lectures, feasts, a sumbl, and a sail on a Viking ship and boat. It was eye opening to see the strong warriors of OWT incorporating glíma into their Viking combat. We are grateful to OWT for their hospitality.



Hurstwic had a full schedule of lectures, podcasts, and other public appearances in 2024. Hurstwic's Reynir A. Óskarson was interviewed by Ian McCollum for his *Forgotten Weapons* YouTube channel talking about [Viking swords](#) and again about [Viking axes](#). William R. Short presented a lecture at the [Scandinavian Cultural Center](#) on our burning longhouse experiments, sharing some of the preliminary data and showing some of the horrific videos capturing the scenes inside the burning house. Additionally, a number of people posted videos shot at the Fire Festival, including Old Norse specialist [Jackson Crawford](#). Reynir and William were interviewed on [Vikology](#), discussing the tactic of burning houses and talking about the results of our experiments.

Planning for next year's projects have begun, and even though the year has not even started it is looking very fruitful.

From all of us at [Hurstwic](#), we wish all of you a joyous Yule, and a happy new year. As always, we are truly grateful to the kind and generous people who have been a part of Hurstwic's life in 2024.

