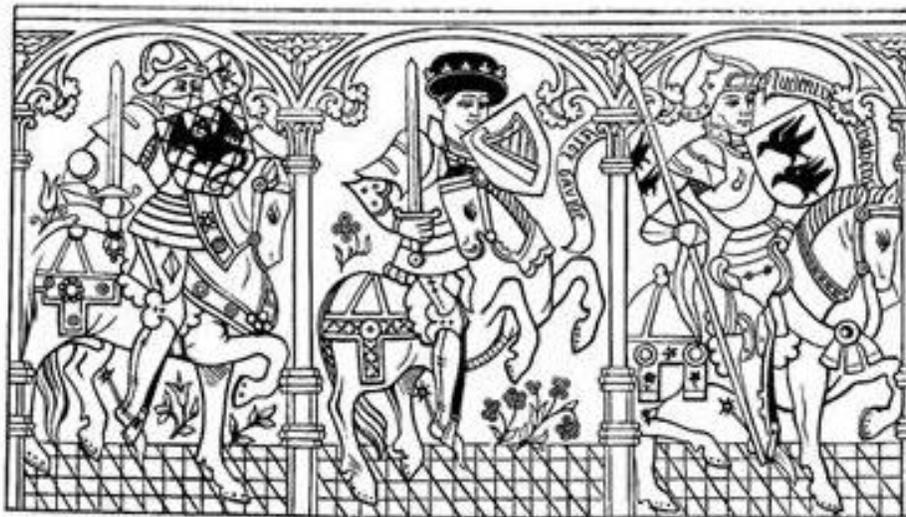


Clyffe Notes



The Newsletter of the Barony of Dun Carraig
Volume XVJJJ, Issue VI A.S. XLJJ,
June 2007

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- The Wisdom of St. Rowena: Quote by Lady Rowena le Osteler. The history was written by Adriana Michaels.
- Feasting and Fasting in Anglo-Saxon England by Sue Levick



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June 2007

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

Black—Meetings Green—Events Red—Marshaled Practices Purple—Everything Else		Blue—A&S			1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		Baronial Business Meeting	Armored & Rapier Practice	Archery Practice		Highland River Melees— Highland Ford
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
			Armored & Rapier Practice	Archery Practice	Relay for Life	Relay for Life Stierbach Birthday
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
			Armored & Rapier Practice	Archery Practice		Challenge of the Heart
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
			Armored & Rapier Practice	Archery Practice		Crescent Guard's Atlantian Games— Bright Hills

July 2007

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

1	2	3 Baronial Business Meeting	4 Armored & Rapier Practice	5 Archery Practice	6 Assessment—Barony of Black Diamond	7
8 Assessment	9	10	11 Armored & Rapier Practice	12 Archery Practice	13 Storvik Novice Tourney	14
15	16	17	18 Armored & Rapier Practice	19 Archery Practice	20	21
22	23	24	25 Armored & Rapier Practice	26 Archery Practice	27 Pennsic Landgrab	28 Pennsic
29 Pennsic	30	31	Black—Meetings Green—Events Red—Marshaled Practices Purple—Everything Else Blue—A&S			

Upcoming Events for June

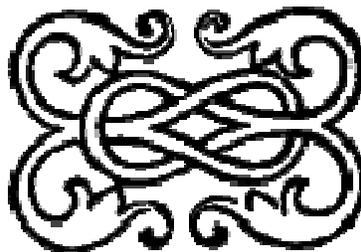
- ◆ June 8-10 Highland River Melees Highland Foorde Hagerstown, MD
- ◆ June 16 Warrior Games Tear-Sea's Shore Harleyville, SC
- ◆ June 23 Challenge of the Heart Dun Carraig Huntingtown, MD
- ◆ June 29-July 1 The Crescent Guard's Atlantian Games Bright Hills Glen Arm, MD

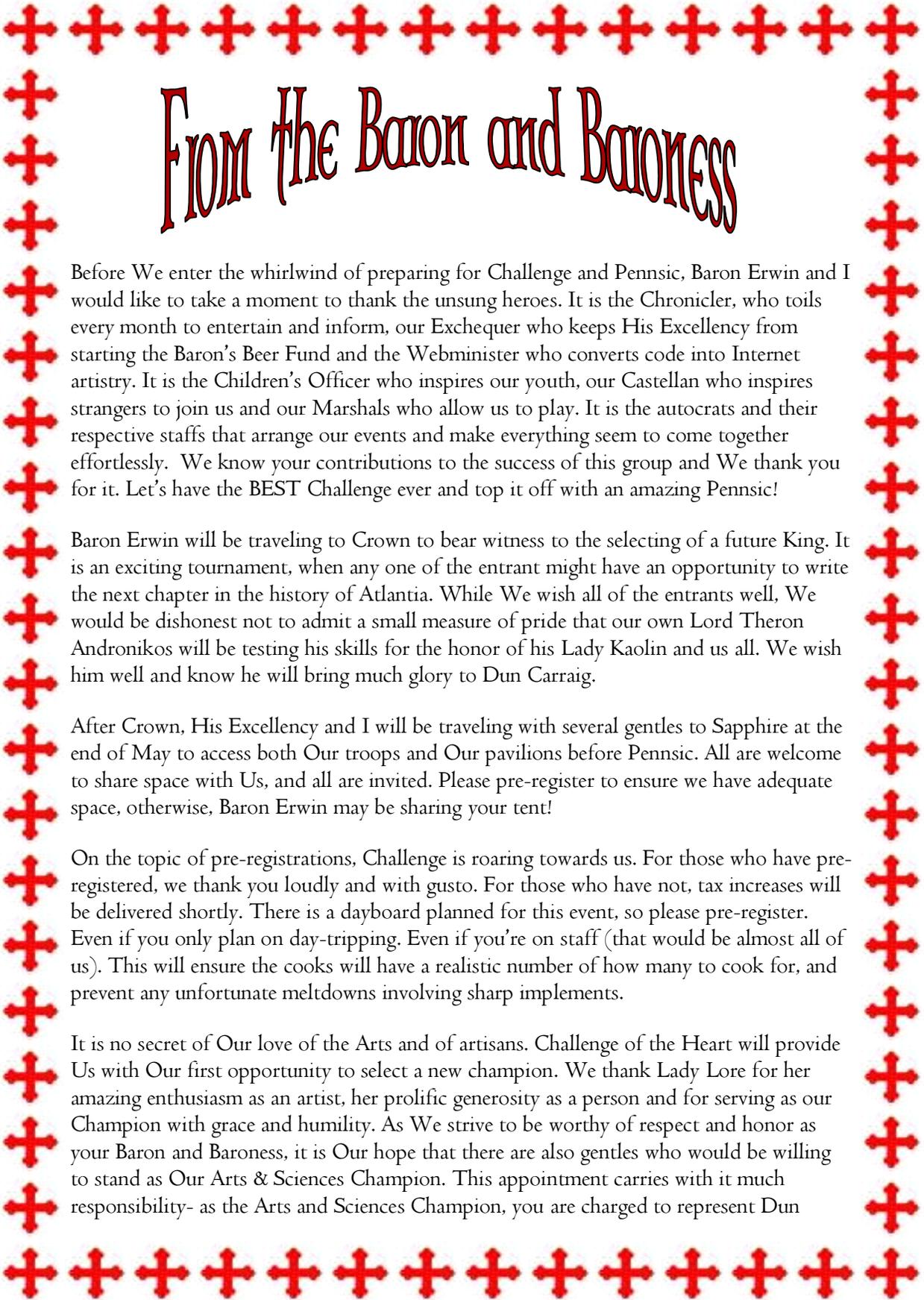
Upcoming Events for July

- ◆ July 6-8 Assessment (R) Black Diamond Big Island, VA
- ◆ July 27– August 12 Pennsic XXXVI (R) Aethelmearc Cooper's Lake, PA

Upcoming Events for August

- ◆ PENNSIC
- ◆ PENNSIC
- ◆ PENNSIC
- ◆ Did we mention **PENNSIC?**
- ◆ The rest of August Recovering from Pennsic





From The Baron and Baroness

Before We enter the whirlwind of preparing for Challenge and Pennsic, Baron Erwin and I would like to take a moment to thank the unsung heroes. It is the Chronicler, who toils every month to entertain and inform, our Exchequer who keeps His Excellency from starting the Baron's Beer Fund and the Webminister who converts code into Internet artistry. It is the Children's Officer who inspires our youth, our Castellan who inspires strangers to join us and our Marshals who allow us to play. It is the autocrats and their respective staffs that arrange our events and make everything seem to come together effortlessly. We know your contributions to the success of this group and We thank you for it. Let's have the BEST Challenge ever and top it off with an amazing Pennsic!

Baron Erwin will be traveling to Crown to bear witness to the selecting of a future King. It is an exciting tournament, when any one of the entrant might have an opportunity to write the next chapter in the history of Atlantia. While We wish all of the entrants well, We would be dishonest not to admit a small measure of pride that our own Lord Theron Andronikos will be testing his skills for the honor of his Lady Kaolin and us all. We wish him well and know he will bring much glory to Dun Carraig.

After Crown, His Excellency and I will be traveling with several gentles to Sapphire at the end of May to access both Our troops and Our pavilions before Pennsic. All are welcome to share space with Us, and all are invited. Please pre-register to ensure we have adequate space, otherwise, Baron Erwin may be sharing your tent!

On the topic of pre-registrations, Challenge is roaring towards us. For those who have pre-registered, we thank you loudly and with gusto. For those who have not, tax increases will be delivered shortly. There is a dayboard planned for this event, so please pre-register. Even if you only plan on day-tripping. Even if you're on staff (that would be almost all of us). This will ensure the cooks will have a realistic number of how many to cook for, and prevent any unfortunate meltdowns involving sharp implements.

It is no secret of Our love of the Arts and of artisans. Challenge of the Heart will provide Us with Our first opportunity to select a new champion. We thank Lady Lore for her amazing enthusiasm as an artist, her prolific generosity as a person and for serving as our Champion with grace and humility. As We strive to be worthy of respect and honor as your Baron and Baroness, it is Our hope that there are also gentles who would be willing to stand as Our Arts & Sciences Champion. This appointment carries with it much responsibility- as the Arts and Sciences Champion, you are charged to represent Dun

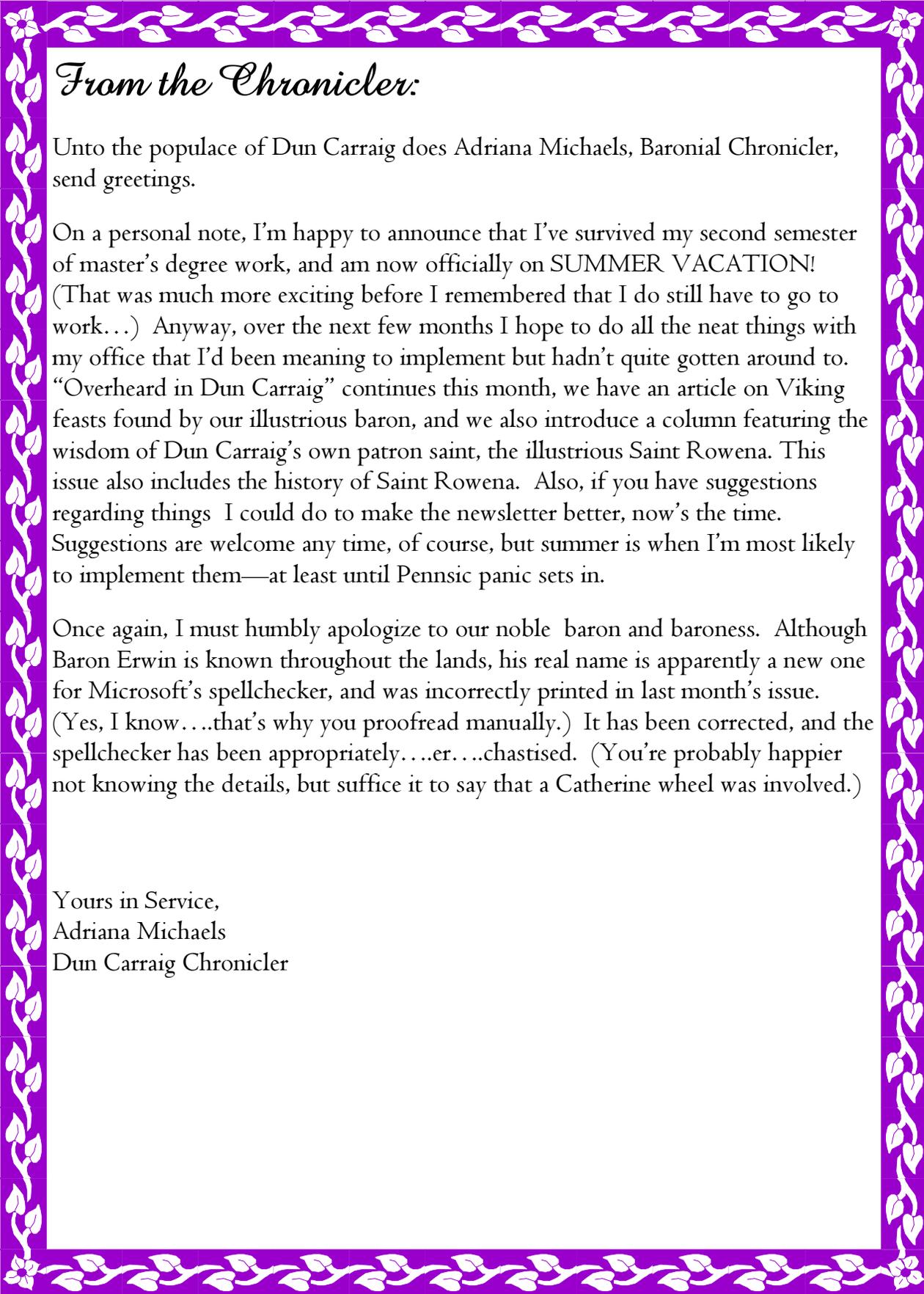
Carraig at the Kingdom Arts and Sciences Festival in March. It is also Our hope that Our A&S Champions (past and present) would encourage ALL artisans within the Barony and constantly strive to share the spark of creativity that illuminates the SCA. The badge of the Arts and Sciences officer is a burning candle, and so the A&S Champion carries a lantern that she may both protect the flame of inspiration and share it with others.

Challenge of the Heart may also attract new people, drawn by the magic of the sword, the flash of the epee or the swirl of beautiful clothing. Each of us (and that is NOT the royal “us”) has an opportunity to shape someone’s impression of who we are and what we do. Please make an effort to speak with that unfamiliar face. You never know, it might be your next autocrat or future peer. You are Our best advertising to the outside world. Your enthusiasm, your beautiful families and the love we share for each other. These things cannot be expressed though flyers and brochures. Indeed, even Our attempts with the written word cannot do you justice. We look forward to showcasing the things that make Dun Carraig such an amazing barony during Challenge and beyond.

Yours in service,

Erwin Bloodax and Mary Isabel of Heatherstone





From the Chronicler:

Unto the populace of Dun Carraig does Adriana Michaels, Baronial Chronicler, send greetings.

On a personal note, I'm happy to announce that I've survived my second semester of master's degree work, and am now officially on SUMMER VACATION! (That was much more exciting before I remembered that I do still have to go to work...) Anyway, over the next few months I hope to do all the neat things with my office that I'd been meaning to implement but hadn't quite gotten around to. "Overheard in Dun Carraig" continues this month, we have an article on Viking feasts found by our illustrious baron, and we also introduce a column featuring the wisdom of Dun Carraig's own patron saint, the illustrious Saint Rowena. This issue also includes the history of Saint Rowena. Also, if you have suggestions regarding things I could do to make the newsletter better, now's the time. Suggestions are welcome any time, of course, but summer is when I'm most likely to implement them—at least until Pennsic panic sets in.

Once again, I must humbly apologize to our noble baron and baroness. Although Baron Erwin is known throughout the lands, his real name is apparently a new one for Microsoft's spellchecker, and was incorrectly printed in last month's issue. (Yes, I know...that's why you proofread manually.) It has been corrected, and the spellchecker has been appropriately...er...chastised. (You're probably happier not knowing the details, but suffice it to say that a Catherine wheel was involved.)

Yours in Service,
Adriana Michaels
Dun Carraig Chronicler

BARONIAL BUSINESS MEETING

The June business meeting will be held Tuesday, June 5th at 7:30 PM, at the Southern Maryland Higher Ed Center in California. (44219 Airport Road California, MD).

FROM CHARLES CO & THE NORTH: Take Route 5 to Route 235. Follow Route 235 approximately 13 miles to Wildewood Shopping Center (Airport Road). Turn right on Airport Road; Center is 3/10 mile up the hill on the left.

FROM CALVERT CO & THE SOUTH: From Solomons: Follow Route 4 across the Bridge into St. Mary's County. Proceed approximately 4 miles to the intersection of Rt. 4 and Rt. 235. Turn Right (North) on Route 235 At the 2nd light, turn left onto Airport Road (at the Outback Steak House) and proceed 3/10 mile. Center is on the left.

FROM PATUXENT RIVER NAVAL AIR BASE: North on Route 235 - 6 miles. Turn Left on Airport Road (at Outback Steak House). Proceed 3/10 mile on Airport Road. SMHEC is located on the left across from the SMC Airport Runway.

Baronial Business Meeting Minutes May 1, 2007

In attendance: Mathias, Theron, Khadir, Minna, Sheryl, Mary Isabel, Alsandair, Gwenllian, Adriana, Matthew, Mathilde, Lore

Officers' Reports

Minister of Arts & Sciences

We've had several classes in the past month. The following classes are coming up:

Psyanki eggs on the 8th,

Arrow making on the 22nd

If you are interested in a particular topic for classes, tell Khadir.

Her Excellency has also suggested persona development classes, the sorts of things we would have done for newcomers, but open to everyone. Courses will focus on taking persona to the next step.

Other baronies have had similar problems we have had with attendance of classes. Theron suggested to them the idea we've used of requiring pre-registrations—if no one pre-regges, class is cancelled before instructor wastes any time.

We have access to SMHEC Tuesday nights and hope to would like to do a once-a-month class of some sort here. Classes better suited to higher ed center than someone's living room.

Not-Chirurgion

Nothing to report., though she hopes to do her apprenticeship thing at Challenge.

Castellan

We are getting some new people. A couple new people at practice—one doing armored combat, and one doing rapier...both named James.

Theron also went to a Dagorhir practice; a few people there have been involved with the SCA, and it might be a pool of people for us to draw from.

Chancellor of Youth

The BoD will vote on background check stuff at the next BoD meeting

One week from Saturday is the Tournoi d'Enfants.

Pages classes will be taught by Gwen, Adriana, and Khadir. Lady Gwen encourages barony members to attend. They're worried people won't show up because it's opposed to a fighting event. Come, bring your friends. Bring your kids, bring your friends' kids (with the special medical form).

Kids' stuff is in the works for Challenge. Gwen is looking for a pages' class. Kids are short on A&S and history/chivalry classes to move to the next level.

Kids can participate in artisan's row at Challenge—we may be able to work out a way to make that be a class.

At Challenge, Theron's teaching a chivalry class. Adriana's teaching fingerloop braid.

Gwenllian can't find rules on line for children's A&S entries—will get together with Khadir to find out what they are.

We have a theme for kids' activities at Birthday---Day in the Life of a Viking Child. ...Cathal will teach Viking chain-weaving, and other Viking classes are encouraged. For example, a class on making nets would be appropriate, since Viking kids did fishing & net-making.

MOL

Still needs a deputy.

Webminister

There have been some issues with the database, but they have been corrected.

Matt has the May Clyffe Notes up, will upload April's. It disappeared due to webpage issues, Chronicler re-uploaded it, but due to database errors, it didn't show up. (One obnoxious little space at the beginning of a file can mess everything up.)

Calendar is still down.

Email forwarders should be working, but we still have issues with @duncarraig email addresses

Matt has been asked to work on getting actual POP emails for castellan@ seneschal@, to avoid putting people's emails into spam.

If you find a page that still has the dark background, let Matt know.

Exchequer

Advance to Theron for the shed for \$1,000.00 will be re-deposited to account as we cannot have an outstanding cash advance for that length of time. They are saying it won't be in until late May or early June now.

I'm still working with those who have funds approved for them for spending but that haven't been spent yet. Theron regarding the List Fence (\$40 approved); Theron regarding the baronial tent repair (\$20 approved); & Mathias regarding general Quartermaster supplies for loaner gear and kitchen supplies (\$75 approved).

We have \$2,791.86 in our account at this time. \$610.00 is dedicated funds, leaving a working balance of approximately \$2,181.86. From that, about \$1,407.00 is needed for Challenge advancements, leaving about \$774.86 to work with.

Herald

Nothing new to report. Will send quarterly report out.

Chronicler

Clyffe Notes was published—thanks to Alsandair for taking over this month.

The 1st quarter report was turned in on time.

Please send me articles for the June Clyffe Notes. (Note. If you're reading this, it's a bit late for June, but please send me stuff for the July issue.)

Quartermaster

Hank has talked to the church about the pot that went missing—he doesn't think the barony's pot actually got to Middle Eastern. We did get Hank's; it was at the church. We are still missing the barony's pot.

Suggests asking Rose & Jonathas/Amalia if either of them has the pot at their place.

Theron asked Hank to figure out what we need in terms of kitchen gear that we don't have.

Molly suggests etching stuff with who it belongs to. We can also make sure everything has a red mark on it to verify that it's ours.

B&B

The B&B wish to remind everyone that May 15 is the mail-in registration deadline for Pennsic. June 15 is the on-line registration deadline. The drop-down window name is "Barony of Dun Carraig" Pre-reg early. Pre-reg often.

Robert's restaurant is having a Relay fundraiser. (In Dares beach)

The baroness also urges everyone to pre-reg for Sapphire (send checks to Matthew & Adriana). It works much like Pennsic, in that our camp will get more space if more people pre-register.

Jynette and Erick, and their new baby Gabby are doing well.

Erwin is going to Crown, but Molly has finals. Both are going to Sapphire. The B&B will try to better post what events they're going to.

The B&B would like to thank Matt for the work on the website & Alex for working with SMHEC to get us a venue for classes.

Seneschal

Agendas—if you want something to be on the agenda for discussion at business meeting, please let Theron know the Friday before. (This deadline was set based on the officers' meetings, which are no longer happening every month.)

Theron also encourages anyone who has questions or concerns about any baronial business to contact him.

Officers, please continue to send your reports to Theron.

Knight Marshal

The knight marshal's report was presented by Theorn, as Cathal was out.

We have a couple new people coming to practice; the new folks have signed waivers, which will go to

waiver secretary. Theron encourages people to get their blue cards.

Youth rapier is active as of today. Yay! It's for kids 12 and up. Training starts with a foil. Armor requirements are the same as for adults, with the exception that all youth fencers will need a gorget. It took a lot of hard work from a lot of marshals to make this happen.

Kids' Castle

The barony discussed two potential children's castle options...an inflatable bouncy castle or a wooden structure. The group discussed the pros and cons of each.

Wooden castle

We'd need to build it out of plywood and dowels. There's no kit, it's just instructions. 4.5 sheets of plywood, cut out 4 sides. Held together with dowels, can be stored/transported flat.

Pros	Cons
Sturdier	Tough to Transport (can get it in the trailer for our own events)
Blends in better—wood is period	Finding time to get it done
Cheaper	Possibility of splinters (though we can sand it down)
Coolness factor	Would be dominated by older kids.
Wood's replaceable, kids are rough. Can't be popped.	
We have places to build & people who are good at woodworking.	

Bouncy Castle

Pros	Cons
Kids have enjoyed the one at Ponte Alto	Storage & cleaning of bouncy balls
Can be used inside or out	Ponte Alto already has one.
Would be easy to clean	Rose's kids got tired of it pretty quickly.
	More expensive than the wooden castle.

It was voted unanimously that we'd get the wooden castle—Lore has volunteered to build it.

Challenge of the Heart

Site Fees are as follows:

	Daytrip	Feast	Below the Salt Feast	Cabin (Per Person)	Tent Camping (Per Person)
Adult Member	10	8	5	6	4
Adult Non-Member	13	8	5	6	4
Child (6-17)	8	8	5	6	0
Child (0-5)	0	0	0	0	0

Roof

The hardware place will give us a 5% discount. 250-300 dollars was our original estimate, so that takes maybe 15 dollars off.

Those who volunteered: Jim, Theron, Alex, Erwin, Shane/Lore, Matt, Kelly

First work day will be on the 19th, may need to continue on the 20th. We can camp that weekend if we like to work. Jim will call Jackie to verify that we can work that weekend, and that the 1st cabin is still available.

Rose and Adenwald's get together for Adenwald's birthday is on the 20th.

The barony has approved up to \$300 to cover roof supplies.

Scheduling

Those running activities at Challenge, please get Mathias ideas for when things should happen, space requirements, etc., where do we want MoL, Ladies Gallery, etc.—He wants to be able to start planning schedule/layout.

Miscellaneous

- ◆ Gate times need to be checked on, because they changed some, Mathias will double check on it when he calls to check about the cabin.
- ◆ Mathias will put in waiver so we can have beer and white wine in hall sat evening.
- ◆ We may get the group that sang for us last year.
- ◆ We are doing a war practice the Sunday after Challenge.
- ◆ We'd like to do breakfast, but no one has volunteered for that yet.
- ◆ Theron volunteered tentatively to be in charge of clean-up if Greg can't.
- ◆ Needs someone to be in charge of A&S competition.
- ◆ If anyone wants to work troll, get with Serena. She really needs volunteers.

Relay for Life

We have 4 people on the team and have raised over 600.

To sign up, go to <https://www.kintera.org/faf/search/searchTeamPart.asp?ievent=189702&team=1946188>

This is the weekend right before Challenge, June 16 & 17.

Candles can be purchased in memory of someone who has lost fight with cancer or in honor of someone that is fighting or has won.

Bobbi can do custom candy wrappers as a fundraiser.

New Business

Troll/Gate

Lady Serena brought up that it's been requested by a member of the barony that we use a more period term for "troll," such as "gate." Various terms were discussed at the business meeting.

Knowne World Costumers' Symposium

It has been suggested that this be hosted by Atlantia. . .the event would need a hotel that could support 300 people, ballroom, conference room, classrooms. Looking for site in Dun Carraig or Storvik. Anyone who knows of a place that might work, contact Mathilde.

The Wisdom of Saint Rowena

"Apparently, the real purpose of vambraces is to remove women's clothing."



The History of St. Rowena

And it came to pass when some members of the army of Dun Carraig were practice their skill at arms that His Excellency, the noble Baron Erwin Bloodax, was sparring with Lord Theron Andronikos. Lo, the blows flew fast and fierce, and mightily did Lord Theron strike the Baron. But woe to Lord Theron, for his mighty blow fell upon the baron's...er...nether regions. And so it was that the baron was displeased. And verily, the baroness was even more displeased. For on the following day, Lady Rowena did send a missive to the baroness, informing her of the blow to the Baron's cup. And thus it was decreed by the fair baroness that Lord Theron should repay His Excellency in the sum of one dozen chocolate chip cookies. Lord Theron's noble lady Kaolin did bake a great quantity of cookies, which were presented unto their excellencies and greatly enjoyed by both the baronage and the populace. For her tattling. . .that is, her great honesty was Lady Rowena deemed a Saint by the baron and baroness. And there was much rejoicing. Yay.

Overheard in Dun Carraig

The following quotes, heard in the barony in the past month at events, practices, and A&S workshops, are provided for your amusement. Most of these came from the business meeting's discussion of possibly purchasing an inflatable bouncy castle/ball pit for the kids. (I take no responsibility if your mind went somewhere else entirely...)

Welcome to the group. What part of it would you like to run?

We don't need any balls.

Which one of me do you want to talk to?

What are you flopping around over there?

I like that. Let's go with COC. (COC = "Chancellor of Children")

There's a big difference between <bang> and poke.

Anything that blows up can pop.

Cleaning every ball is kind of hard.

While the inflatable portion may get flat, the balls don't.

Relay for Life

Join the barony of Dun Carraig at the Calvert County Relay for Life, from Friday, June 15 at 6:00 PM to Saturday, June 16 at 6:00 AM. This is a fundraising opportunity for the American Cancer Society, as well as a demo for the barony. We'll have a tent set up, and will be walking the track in garb. The baronial team currently has six members and has raised over \$700. Our team name is SCA—Barony of Dun Carraig, and our team web page is here:

<https://www.kintera.org/faf/search/searchTeamPart.aspx?ievent=189702&team=1946188>

Come join us to raise money for a good cause and show off the SCA to Calvert County!

Feasting and Fasting in Anglo-Saxon England

By Sue Levick

Chronicler's Note: Sue Levick (later Peacock) was for several years an admired and formative member of Regia Anglorum (www.regia.org) Sadly, Sue has gone before us and we speak her name in honor for her good humor and hard work in encouraging others to follow in her footsteps. We are grateful to Regia Anglorum for allowing us to reprint the article she wrote.

A good party is something which was enjoyed as much by the people of the ninth to the eleventh centuries as is it today and the role of Feast-Giver was one to be enjoyed as well as admired. The feast hall was, in itself, a sight to behold. Great halls decorated with fine wall hangings; kept warm with fires, lamps and people; the colour and splendour of the clothes kept for such occasions all added to the atmosphere.

It seems, from written evidence of the period, that feast day food was looked forward to with anticipation and pleasure. You could look to having better food at a feast as well as copious quantities. Choicer cuts of meat, roasts - hot from the kitchen, rich sauces, cheeses, fish, sweet meats, fresh - well dressed salads, quality breads and plenty to drink. Beef and pork were well liked as the animals could be fattened for the purpose, poultry too was a tender meat, in some cases game and fowl such as plover, goose, swan and even peacock were on the menu.

Considerable skill was displayed by the cooks who would have made breads enriched with added milk and/or eggs. The pastry crusts were not only as part of the dish, pies and flans would be moulded and decorated with flower heads in season. There would have been simpler editions for those guests of lower rank. Fish too was often made into what the modern diner would know as pates and terrines each carefully shaped and embellished to show the status of the feast-giver as well as the guest. The ornate dishes transported through time would gain applause from the modern hand and could rival some of the cordon-bleu chiefs of the twentieth century.

Drinks were sometimes brewed specially for a feast as the drinks were regarded as almost as important as the food. Ale, some probably fermented fruit based, beer made from such plants as Bog-Myrtle, meads and wines are recorded. Butter-milk, skimmed milk and whey were also drunk but probably not in such great quantity at a feast.

Three day feasts seem to have been the usual for great celebrations and day-long feasts were common. The feast began with the guests gathering and waiting for the sound of

the horn. Handwashing came next and then they would enter passing the 'door-wardens' who stopped gate-crashers.

There were rules of etiquette even then - from the seating order to the use of napkins, table-cloths, how to eat and what to do if food fell from the table - it was not considered polite to pick it up and eat it, but one should pick it up, bless it, and lay it aside.

(Perhaps this was part of what a rich feast giver used as left-overs to be disposed of in a charitable way?) During the early part of the Anglo-Saxon period a woman's place was not at the table other than as a cup-bearer, the task of cup-bearing even included the lord's wife and daughter, with the most honoured guests being served by them. By the eleventh century they were accepted at the table if they were of sufficient rank. Some guests were entitled to bring companions with them, minstrels and fotsetla (those who sat at the feet) but it was usual for a payment of honey to be made for the privilege.

People went to feasts to enjoy themselves and, especially as they lasted so long, could also expect entertainment. Scops (story tellers) would be welcome to tell of heroic deeds in the form of epic poems. Musicians - harp and lyre players during the meal with bagpipes, trumpets, flutes and drums reserved for after the eating was done. Then, at the feast of a wealthy man, the jesters, actors, dancers, singers could be expected. In an old poem about Athelstan's coronation feast it is recorded that 'stomachs are filled with delicacies, minds with song.' The minstrel was often paid to sing the praises of his master at the feast (as bad as the holiday slides!) 'one makes the harp resound, another contends with praises'. Gifted minstrels could expect good pay, either in the employ of one man or as travelling minstrels. There are records of gifts of jewelled bracelets, grants of land, houses and, for the more immediate moment, a horn of liquor at the end of their song. When that was done, guests would start the 'home-made' entertainment of riddling. Many of these were full of innuendo probably getting worse as the horn toasting cup went round and round those gathered! An account of the murder of King Æthelberht, in 792, tells that the royal party after dinner spent the whole day with music and dancing in great glee. Non-one was expected to leave the hall before the lord retired and many were probably glad of the right to sleep in the hall after the feast.

In addition to feasts given in celebration of such things as weddings, births, betrothals and so on, there were also those which the Church insisted upon. The early Christian Church realised the importance of pagan festivals in peoples' lives and soon found Christian replacements. Festivals were holidays and feasts and the Church even said there should be no fasting on such days. Even the poor had their feasts, those observed for church reasons and those to do with the agricultural tasks being completed. There is evidence of a winter feast, Easter feast, a feast to celebrate the binding of the sheaves, one at which the drink was to flow for ploughing, a reward for mowing, making ricks,

loading wood and carting corn. Even if you were of the poorest class there would be the charity portions - maybe leftovers or even better if there was a good lord. Guilds were established by Anglo-Saxon times and they too had their feasts. The patterns of fasting and feasting were part of everyday life. A one day feast was preceded by a day of fasting. Longer periods of fasting came before periods of feasting and only the infirm and children were excused.

There were three forms of fasting, one which excluded the eating of certain foods, one which only allowed the eating of one limited meal a day and, the one most difficult for the modern mind and stomach, that which demanded the food should have unpalatable additions! (We will not dwell on the latter!)

The reason for fasting was mostly connected with church observations. There was also the practical reason that, at a time of year when food was short, to fast would be a help, in the mind at least. The idea was that those most likely to over-eat could, by fasting, free up supplies for the poor - but how often this happened can only be speculation. The church found all sorts of evidence as to why meat was not always eaten - Adam's sin of gluttony, angels not needing food, Cain's cruelty and, of course, the forty day fast of Christ in the wilderness.

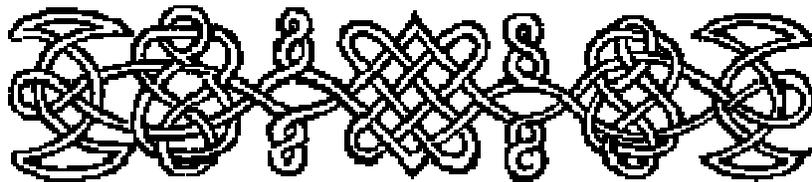
In the time of Æthelred, about 1009, the nation was to fast for the three days before Michaelmas. Slaves were to be freed of work so they would be able to observe the fast and in fact the three day fast became as important as the three day feast.

The importance is evident since it was part of the mass-priest's duties to tell the people of the days - if he failed to do so he could be fined. This is one of the reasons for the introduction of the calendars for fast and feast days being developed. Friday fasting by not eating meat, was common to all and indeed it was said that to violate the rule was the most visible way to reject the faith.

Food for fast days varied for the rich although the poor may not have noticed the difference so much especially if they lived in an area away from the sea and so had limited access to fish. In areas where fish was available it was often caught in times of plenty and smoked or salted for use later, the poor ate this mixed with linseed or rape oil as fast-day food. These areas also had the addition of shell fish at their disposal and even those not living by the sea could find fresh water fish, eels and fresh water mussels. Some foods would appear strange to the modern reader; porpoise, dolphin and otter were not regarded as meat and so could be eaten on fast days except for those needing the strictest observation, like Lent. Many monasteries had fish-pools attached to give plentiful supplies for fast days. A total Vegan diet was not usual although there are recipes for

meals needing no meat, eggs or dairy products. Some fast days only required that the number of meals a day were cut to one and then it could have three or four courses. The amount of food and the time when it was to be consumed was considered and special rules applied to those needing to keep up their strength because of the manual work they undertook. This even applied to some monks and to those who had not taken their final vows. Rules of the time say that, in some cases, two should share the bowl for one but that the dish should have meat puddings and sausages. For others, and if no such things are available, then they should have sufficient soft cheese, fish and whatever vegetable dishes are available instead. Most of the written evidence for fast day foods does come from regulations laid down for the clergy and when reading it it is clear that many of the poorer laymen would have found the monastic meals a feast in themselves.

For all those of you wanting to stray from a self-imposed diet read on ... It was a sin to fast on a feast day 'he who fasts on that day through self-will is to be excommunicated'. In this case the day referred to is Shrove Tuesday but if you want a good excuse - who's counting!?



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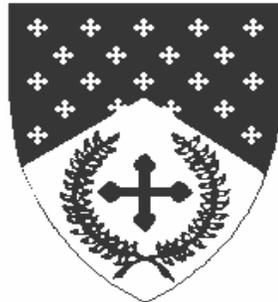


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