

The flamberge

The Bimonthly Newsletter of the Barony of the flame : No. 2 Nov./Dec. 2005



A Missive from Their Excellencies Erick and Camilla

Now that summer is over, the time has come to turn our attention to Christmas Tourney. If your friends have done extraordinary service lately, write them up for awards. The online form is pretty easy to use. For paper recommendations, find the royalty addresses in the Pale. Consider volunteering at Christmas Tourney. MITS, here's your chance to get a signature on your form. Ask the workers at Troll & childcare if they need help. And finally, Erick & I look forward to seeing lots of barony members and household members during clean up after the feast. We'll be there!

Erick & Camilla

Christmas Has Not Been Cancelled!

Contrary to some rumors, Christmas has in fact not been cancelled -and certainly the Christmas season would not be complete without the grand celebration of the Christmas Tournament sponsored by our Barony each year. This tournament is a work of charity as well; those attending are asked to bring some kind of a toy as an entry fee for the Armored Combat and Rapier tournaments which are part of the festivities (it is also possible to

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make cash donation for this purpose of five dollars a more for each tournament.) The toys collected in this manner are given to poor children to give them a share of Christmas joy -a deed which helps in the celebration of their Christmas and is an authentically medieval act and sentiment by which we in the Society clothe ourselves not only in medieval garb and manners, but in the best of that Age's virtue, thus incarnating the Dream in a way that reflects the best and highest aspirations of medieval culture in the practice of almsgiving and charity.

- the Chronicler



The Baronial Device

The baronial device of the Barony of the Flame may be blazoned, “Sable a wavy-bladed sword gules, hilted and the blade enflamed, in base a laurel wreath Or.”

The Worthy Officers and Champions of the Barony of the flame

(Please note that the “@” symbol in the e-mail addresses has been doubled to discourage spammers)

The Baron and Baroness of the Flame:

Sgt. Erick der Rotnacken and Lady Camilla de la Reynard
barons@@baronyoftheflame.org

Seneschal

Lord Edward de Calais
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Herald

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Knight Marshal

Effendi ibn Uzziel
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Chirurgion

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Marshal of Fence

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Chronicler

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Web Minister

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Mistress of Children

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Mistress of Middle Eastern Dance

Lady Aroua
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Archery Champion

Alexander von Stettin
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Arts and Sciences Champion

Ulf
scott.sheldon@@insightbb.com

Heavy Weapons Champion

Pol the Restless
polrestless@@yahoo.com

Light Weapons Champion

Russell W. Watson
ironhead113@@insightbb.com

Regular Activities in The Barony of the Flame

Meetings of the Barony:

Third Sunday of the month, from 4:00-6:00 PM, in the hall of Resurrection Episcopal Church , 4100 Southern Pky., Louisville, KY. All members of the Barony are invited to attend these important sessions.

Armored Combat practice:

Tuesday Nights , at the USAF ROTC Flightline Gym on the campus of the University of Louisville, Louisville KY.

ALSO Thursdays at 7:00 PM at Pritchard Community Center in Elizabethtown, KY. This is a loose practice with not as many people as the Tuesday night practice. It is usually held behind the center unless the weather is bad and then it is held inside.

Contact: Effendi ibn Uzziel Knight Marshal for Armored Combat .

Fencing Practice:

Tuesday Nights , at the USAF ROTC Flightline Gym on the campus of the University of Louisville, Louisville KY, Contact: Lord Aidan Blackstone, Marshal of Fence.

Middle Eastern Dance

Tuesday Nights , at the USAF ROTC Flightline Gym on the campus of the University of Louisville, Louisville KY, Contact: Lady Aroua, Mistress of Middle Eastern Dance.

Devices 101 *by Lady Juliana Montalto del Mar*

The best way to start constructing your own device to remember is to keep it simple. This will help keep your device from being returned, though there are still other factors that may cause it to be returned.

The first building block of a device is to select the base tincture. Think of a blank shield and paint it one color or metal (this is called “the field”) as follows. The tinctures used in our heraldry are of two classes: the Colors- Azure (blue), Vert (green), Gules (red), Sable (black), Purpure (purple); and the Metals- Or (gold) and Argent (white/silver).

Next is the charge, the “design” part of your device. If your field is a color, your charge must be a metal. The rule is “no color on color, no metal on metal.” So if you want a sword as your charge on a Sable field, you can only tincture it Argent or Or .

The Standard and Usual Disclaimer and Publishing Information

The Flamberge is the bimonthly newsletter of the Barony of the Flame in the Middle Kingdom, a local branch of the Society of Creative Anachronism (SCA), a non-profit and educational society based in Milpitas, CA, devoted to the re-creation of the arts, skills, and life of the Middle Ages. We are based in Louisville, KY. The Flambergea is available from J. Stephen Hayes, P.O. Box 71, Springfield, KY 40069-0071, known in the Society as Tigernach mac Eóghain ua Áeda, currently serving as Baronial Chronicler and publisher of the Flamberge. The Flamberge is not an official publication of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. and does not delineate SCA policy. The Flamberge is free of charge when distributed through the Internet as a PDF file. Hard-copy subscriptions by mail cost \$8.00 (USD) per annum and may be obtained by contacting the Baronial Chronicler.

Scribing and Calligraphy:

Tuesday Nights , Second floor classroom 202 at the USAF ROTC Flightline Gym on the campus of the University of Louisville, Louisville KY, Contact: Mistress Bianca, Minister of Arts & Sciences.

Stuff and Nonsense:

Monday nights, Held at the residence of Sör Ustad Hussan. Please contact Sör Ustad (ustad@msn.com) for directions or if you have any questions.

ADD YOUR ACTIVITY HERE!

The flamberge is always looking for articles, photos, poems, and the odd paragraph of lyrical prose, nuggets of historical information, quizzes, new ideas, and the like. It will be a superior publication if the Chronicler can focus on editing and minimize his own writing! Submit your work and see it in print!

A Saint for the festive Season

by Magistra Nicolaa de Bracton

Almost everyone knows that St. Nicholas is associated with the Christmas season, that the name "Santa Claus" itself evolved from his name. Fewer people know about the historical St. Nicholas or about the way he was revered in the Middle Ages. I set off to find out a little bit about him.

Nicholas himself is almost legendary. He is supposed to have been Bishop of Myra (in Asia Minor) around the time of Constantine the Great (early fourth century). His first mention in literature is in the reign of Justinian (sixth century). Between these two dates, a body of oral tradition seems to have formed around Myra's legendary first bishop and the miracles associated with his tomb, most notably the fact that the tomb exuded an oil or balm with healing properties.

Nicholas is associated first of all with the sea. Myra was a seaport, and the first church there seems to have been built over an old temple of Poseidon (which, the legend goes, Nicholas is said to have toppled in dramatic fashion). This aspect made him a favourite of sailors (who would often throw three loaves of bread overboard in his honour when they felt a storm brewing), and because Byzantium was an empire built on sea trade, he became a favourite in Constantinople as well.

Another early story of legend discusses Nicholas' saving of three Imperial officials who had been unjustly accused of crimes; Nicholas is thus the prototype of bishops who uphold the Church in the face of opposition from State authority-- a fact which would make him a favourite of reform-minded Popes of the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

Then there is, of course, the famous story of how Nicholas saved the three daughters of a poor man from being sold into prostitution by tossing bags of gold into the windows of their house at night. (In this way, Nicholas became associated with gift-giving, patronage of the

poor, and, incidentally, of pawnbrokers, who still use the symbol of three balls of gold to this day.) You will notice the number three keeps reappearing in Nicholas stories -- many in the Middle Ages thus associated him with the Trinity, and thus, the defence of orthodoxy.

A final famous story about Nicholas should be mentioned. He is said to have resurrected three boys or students, who had been killed and pickled in a tub (sometimes for as long as seven years) by a nasty innkeeper. In this way, Nicholas became associated with the patronage of children and students. His feast day is close to that of St. Catherine of Alexandria, another patron of scholars, and the two thus became associated with each other (Nicholas and Catherine was a favourite pair of names for twins in the Middle Ages.)

In an event mentioned by nearly every major western chronicler, Nicholas' body and relics were translated (moved) to the Italian city of Bari in 1087. Thereafter, the cult of Nicholas, heretofore a mostly Byzantine saint, became more and more popular in the West, aided, perhaps, by the presence of Russian Varangians in Bari, who regarded Nicholas as the patron of their own people. Interestingly enough, the new tomb in Bari also exuded an oil or balm as well.

Nicholas was the subject, along with Catherine, of the earliest extant mystery plays of the Middle Ages. He also became a favourite patron of guilds and confraternities, as he was associated both with helping the poor and with merchants and banking. Because of his association with students and the poor, he became associated especially with the Friars Minor (Franciscans); the proper name of Greyfriars at Oxford is actually the College of St. Nicholas.

In the later Middle Ages, several traditions became associated with the celebration of St. Nicholas Day (December 6). One of these was

the tradition of the "Boy Bishop", where students in the schools would choose one of their own to rule them for the Christmas season, often to delicious excess. Gift-giving would also often be involved. Many of these traditions also became associated with the twelve days after Christmas, as gift-giving was also associated with the New Year, and because of the tradition of the arrival of the Magi bearing gifts for the Christ Child on January 6. Even after tight controls were placed on these official celebrations, Nicholas continued to play a part in less official ones. Often accompanied by devils or fairies (such as Black Peter), he would visit the homes of children in the Netherlands, leaving fruits, candies, and "Nicholas cakes" in the shoes of good children, and bundles of switches in those of bad children. Mummers' processions often involved Nicholas as well. Partially as a result of these decidedly secular observances, Nicholas gradually lost status as one of the more exalted saints of the Catholic church.

The invention of Santa Claus is another thing altogether. Many of these customs had died out in Europe by the nineteenth century, only to be revived by American writers like Washington Irving and Clement Moore, who reinvented the old saint in a new guise. Nicholas, who had once rode a white horse like a knight, was now equipped with a sleigh and reindeer, and the sprites who once accompanied him were now transformed into toymaking elves. This American Santa has traveled back across the Atlantic in the past hundred years and reawakened the memories of old customs long forgotten in those countries. But he, like so many of the "old traditions" we observe, is a product of the nineteenth century--though his antecedents may certainly be found in the St. Nicholas of the Middle Ages.

Source:

Charles W. Jones, *Saint Nicholas of Myra, Bari, and Manhattan*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.

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Who is Magistra Nicolaa de Bracton?

Magistra Nicolaa de Bracton, O.L., O.P, currently serving a term as Society Chronicler, lives in the Canton of Eoforwic in the Kingdom of Ealdormere, otherwise known as most of the Province of Ontario, Canada. She was made a Companion of the Order of the Laurel in April, A.S. 30 (1996) for her research and article writing, and a Companion of the Order of the Pelican in September, A.S. 38. She is also involved in archery, pewter casting, costuming, calligraphy, and is a former chronicler at local, baronial, and Principality levels. She is a former editor for *Tournaments Illuminated*, the quarterly magazine of the SCA. She has also served as editor for the past four years of the Pennsic Independent. She has numerous dependents in the SCA.

Outside the SCA, Susan Carroll-Clarke holds a PhD in History, which, according to her website description, "mostly hangs on the wall looking pretty" while she works at a large bank as a business analyst and "tech-herder".

This Just In... Officers' Letters

From the Seneschal:

Thanks to everyone who came to the Zoo Halloween Party. It was great to see so many out. It was also great to see more people at the November meeting.

-- *Edward de Calais*

From the Herald:

It has been great being the Baronial Herald. Alex (Ogre) will be taking the position in January. I will still be available for any questions (herald-at-large). Thanks to everyone.

-- *Lady Juliana Montalto del Mar*



The Flamberge
SCA-Barony of the Flame
c/o J.S. Hayes
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Springfield, KY 40069-0071

Place
Address Label
Here

Our Local Calendar – Upcoming Events

Dec. 2005

- 3- [Christmas Tourney](#) {Flame} [Radcliff, KY]
- 6- Practice meetings at Flightline Gym, U.of.L. campus, 7:30-9:00 PM
[Cook's Symposium](#) {Three Hills} [Kalamazoo, MI]
- 10- 9th Annual Barony of Red Spears Yule Feast {Hrodgeirsfjordr} [Toledo, OH]
[Boars Head](#) {Caer Anterth Mawr} [West Bend, WI]
- 13- Practice meetings at Flightline Gym, U.of.L. campus, 7:30-9:00 PM
- 17- Baronial Business meeting, Church of the Resurrection, Louisville, 4:00-6:00 PM
[Bardic Madness South](#) {Sternfeld} [Tipton, IN]
- 20- Practice meetings at Flightline Gym, U.of.L. campus, 7:30-9:00 PM
- 27- Practice meetings at Flightline Gym, U.of.L. campus, 7:30-9:00 PM

Jan. 2006

- 4- Practice meetings at Flightline Gym, U.of.L. campus, 7:30-9:00 PM
- 7- Barony Flaming Gryphon 12th Night {Flaming Gryphon} [Springfield, OH]
 - Kingdom [Twelfth Night](#) {Ealdnordwuda (Northwoods)} [Lansing, MI]
- 11- Practice meetings at Flightline Gym, U.of.L. campus, 7:30-9:00 PM
- 18- Practice meetings at Flightline Gym, U.of.L. campus, 7:30-9:00 PM
- 21- Baronial Business meeting, Church of the Resurrection, Louisville, 4:00-6:00 PM
 - [Festival of Maidens XXXIII](#) {Wurm Wald} [Urbana, IL]
 - [Winter Revel](#) {Three Walls} [Ionia, MI]
- 25- Practice meetings at Flightline Gym, U.of.L. campus, 7:30-9:00 PM
- 28 - [Regular Event in Cleftlands: A Day of Chivalry and Romance](#) {Cleftlands} [Cleveland, OH]