



A Cleftlands (Middle Kingdom) Newsletter - 9/5/2021

Cleftlands Baronial Meeting Survey

Thanks to all who completed the survey on Baronial meetings! The survey opened August 18 and closed on September 1. We had 61 total participants respond.

After reviewing the results, about 3/4 of the respondents preferred to meet less than weekly going forward. To that end, we plan to continue to have Baronial meetings on alternating Wednesdays through the end of the year (as holidays and other conflicts allow). We will assess again at the end of October - if the infection levels show a consistent and lasting decline, and there aren't any further restrictions in place, we will look to increase meeting frequency. We want to make sure people have time to plan and make arrangements if needed.

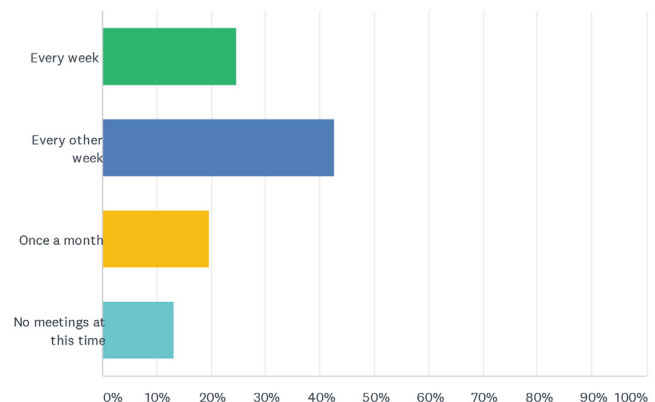
Following are the results of the survey (please note that the percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number for simplicity in reporting):

Question 1: Compared to before the pandemic, over the next six months do you plan to participate in SCA activities: a.) More often than before; b.) Less often than before; c.) About the same amount of time as before the pandemic

Approximately 59% answered that they planned to participate less often than before, while 33% felt they'd be spending about the same amount of time on SCA activities. That leaves just 8% who hope to participate more.

Question 2: Considering the current restrictions on activities in the Middle Kingdom (wearing of masks indoors, no sharing of food and drink, attendance must be taken, etc.), as well as the high COVID infection rate in Cuyahoga County, how often would you like to have the Baronial meeting in October? a.) Every week; b.) Every other week, c.) Once a month; d.) No meetings at this time.

About 43% of respondents preferred the every other week format, with 20% suggesting that meetings be only once a month. A good portion still wanted meetings every week, at 24%, while 13% preferred no meetings at all. This means that 76% of the populace was most comfortable holding meetings every other week or even less often.



Graph results from question 2 of the survey.

Question 3: If you answered that you would want to have Baronial meetings less often than every week, how long would you want to continue that schedule? a.) Only for October; b.) Through the end of 2021; c.) Until the infection rate goes back to "yellow"; d.) Through the winter; e.) For the foreseeable future; f.) I want to have Baronial meetings every week

The largest percentage of any single answer was (c), until the infection rate improves, with 26%. Those that wanted to have Baronial meetings every week lost a tiny bit of ground to make up 23% of the vote. About 18% preferred to have meetings every other week indefinitely (e), 16% suggested this schedule through the end of 2021, and 13% thought it was safest to keep this schedule for the winter. Only 2 votes, or 3%, thought it would be enough to plan for only October with staggered meetings. Overall, those who wanted staggered schedules for (possibly) longer than October made up 73%. (Note: if you added these up and noticed it comes to 99%, that's because of the rounding.)

Continued on page 2.

Survey - Continued

Question 4: Do you feel comfortable having large, indoor Baronial gatherings such as the rummage sale and other revels (assuming they follow the required guidelines of federal and local laws, Society restrictions, and Kingdom restrictions)? a.) Yes; b.) No

This was a fairly close result, with 56% who felt comfortable with gatherings and 44% who did not.

Question 5: If you are planning to attend SCA activities less often than before the pandemic, what is the reason? a.) COVID concerns; b.) Lost interest in the SCA; c.) Other time commitments; d.) Balancing SCA activities with other interests.

The majority said COVID was their main concern with 74% of the responses. There was a tie for the second-highest reason between (c) and (d) both at 12%. Choice (c), "Lost interest in the SCA" was only 2%.

Again, we appreciate the time that so many of you took to fill out this survey. We are currently expecting that the dates of the upcoming Baronial meetings will be:

- September 15
- Please note we cannot use the site on September 29, which is why there is a gap in the dates.
- October 6 (Baronial yard sale)
- October 20
- November 3
- November 17
- December 1
- December 15
- December 29 (tentative)

Cleftlands meetings from 6:30-10:00 pm at St John of the Cross School, 140 Richmond Road, Cleveland OH 44143. You can sign up for the September 15 meeting in advance here: <https://forms.gle/qyj926Tk53MNEqc46>

After the yard sale, we are not planning any revels for 2021. We hope things get back to normal soon!

Baronial News:

October 6 Baronial Yard Sale - Bring items to sell or trade or give away! We will try to hold it outside - this is both due to COVID and the lack of tables. Please consider bringing your own table or displaying your wares out of the boot of your car.

Reminder: please send "regular" guild announcements, general announcements, or anything else you'd like to announce virtually, to chronicler@cleftlands.org to be included with the meeting notes.

Current Restrictions on SCA Activities in the Middle Kingdom:

- No shared food or drink
- Masks must be worn when inside at any time (by everyone, including combatants)
- Attendance must be taken at all SCA activities
- Pre-registration is required for weekend events
- The disclaimer must be posted for all invitations for any SCA activity, as well as at the activity itself. That is: *Although the SCA complies with all applicable laws to try to ensure the health and safety of our event participants, we cannot eliminate the risk of exposure to infectious diseases during in-person events. By participating in the in-person events of the SCA, you acknowledge and accept the potential risks. You agree to take any additional steps to protect your own health and safety and those under your control as you believe to be necessary.*

Anyone hosting an activity at their home may have additional restrictions. If you want to host an SCA activity with additional requirements, please contact seneschal@cleftlands.org.

Kingdom News

- Unfortunately there was a data breach of the Marshal Database. See more information: <https://midrealm.org/blog/2021/08/27/data-breach/>

SCA News

- July 2021 President's Report Now Available: <https://www.sca.org/news/july-2021-presidents-report-now-available/>
- Open Position: Society Chatelaine: <https://www.sca.org/news/open-position-society-chatelaine/>

5 Questions for Cleftlanders: Syr Lorimer MacAltin of the Garioch, Baron Flaming Gryphon (mka Phil Freund) (he/him)

1.) How did you join the SCA?

I first heard about the SCA from reading about it in the afterword of a Poul Anderson novel while I was in High School. At the time, there wasn't any activity near where I lived so I put finding it aside. A couple of years later, when I was in college in Maine, I heard that another student had armor in his dorm room. I was curious so I met him and discovered that he was a member of the SCA. Not long after that, I attended my first event which was the East Kingdom Crown Tournament held by the Barony of Carolingia on the grounds of Wellesley College (outside of Boston) on May 5, 1973. I borrowed a costume from the theater club for the event.



2.) What are your two main activities in the SCA?

Dancing and singing for Choral Balls, both of which are severely constrained by the Pandemic. Currently, I'm doing a lot of talking with folks instead!

3.) You founded a Barony! What was that process like?

To be clear, I helped found the Barony of the Flaming Gryphon. It took a lot of effort by a lot of people to make it happen and I was just one of the movers and shakers for that effort. Our path was a unique one in that we were the first Barony in the Known World to be created by the merger of multiple existing groups into one Barony. There were a lot of meetings and a lot of traveling between the groups. It took a lot of consensus building but our efforts paid off.

4.) What is your favorite thing to do at events?

It depends on the event. Dancing and/or Choral singing if they are done.

5.) What makes Cleftlands different from other SCA groups?

Cleftlands has a huge number of members living in a small area whose interests and activities cover almost the whole spectrum of SCA activities. There are many experts in the Arts & Sciences and most are happy to share their skills with anyone, which is often not true in other groups. There are also an incredibly high number of Peers and Titled individuals for a single group. We are also one of the few groups that have weekly meetings (at least until the pandemic happened). Plus, the weekly meetings are not specialized, but have fighting and Arts/Sciences happening at the same time. Most groups have different meetings for different interests.

Upcoming Cleftlands Weekly Events of Note

- Wednesday Sept 8 - A&S "Beyond the Sonnet" with published poet THL Lyonnete Vibert (Marie Vibbert). This is a virtual class. Get more details: <https://bit.ly/3jIDUST>
- Thursday, Sept 9 7:00-10:00pm - Armorers' Guild Meeting (in person) - The Lash Home in Berea (OH). Contact Baron Syr Calum on the Facebook post or at meeting on Wednesday.
- Tuesday, Sept 14 7:30pm - Needleworkers' Guild Meeting - Both online via Zoom and in person at a location to be determined. See the Facebook event: <https://bit.ly/38HvdSi>
- Wednesday, Sept 15 - In-Person Cleftlands Meeting: St John of the Cross School, 140 Richmond Rd, Cleveland OH 44143. 6:30pm - 10pm.
- Wednesday, September 15 7:30pm - Class: Creating a Name & Heraldry; at the Baronial meeting.
- Thursday, Sept 16 7:00-10:00pm - Armorers' Guild Meeting (in person) - The Lash Home in Berea (OH). Contact Baron Syr Calum on the Facebook post or at meeting on Wednesday.
- Wednesday, Sept 22 7-8:30pm - A&S: Old English Poetic Forms. This is a virtual class: <https://bit.ly/3zLsdAr>
- Thursday, Sept 23 7:00-10:00pm - Armorers' Guild Meeting (in person) - The Lash Home in Berea (OH). Contact Baron Syr Calum on the Facebook post or at meeting on Wednesday.
- Wednesday, Sept 29 7pm - A&S: Baronial Arts Display. This is a virtual meeting: <https://bit.ly/3DJ6xHr>
- Thursday, Sept 30 7:00-10:00pm - Armorers' Guild Meeting (in person) - The Lash Home in Berea (OH). Contact Baron Syr Calum on the Facebook post or at meeting on Wednesday.
- Wednesday, Oct 6 - In-Person Cleftlands Meeting & Yard Sale: St John of the Cross School, 140 Richmond Rd, Cleveland OH 44143. 6:30pm - 10pm.
- Wednesday Oct 6 7:30-8:30pm - Class: Ghost Dance & Dancing with the Dead; at the Baronial meeting.

SCA Period Book Review - “In Search of a Kingdom: Francis Drake, Elizabeth I, and the Perilous Birth of the British Empire”

By THL Jolicia atte Northclyfe

The tale of how the partnership between Queen Elizabeth I, and her “royally sanctioned pirate” Francis Drake brought riches to England, made the nation a world power, and set in motion the Spanish Armada is explained in rich detail in the new book “In Search of a Kingdom: Francis Drake, Elizabeth I, and the Perilous Birth of the British Empire” by Laurence Bergreen (464 pp. Custom House. \$29.99).

Schoolchildren learn that Drake was the first captain to successfully circumnavigate the globe (Ferdinand Magellan died before he returned home), but there is so much more to his story. Bergreen — who has previously written about Christopher Columbus, Marco Polo, and Magellan — brings a flair for storytelling and vigorous research to his examination of Drake’s life in the context of 16th century global politics.

Drake learned seafaring and pirating from his older cousin John Hawkins, a court-sponsored pirate who seized slave ships and sold the captured cargo in the Spanish Caribbean. Drake came to hate the slave trade and the Spanish. The daring brigand formed an alliance with escaped slaves to raid a Spanish mule train carrying gold and silver across Panama and carry the treasure back to England.

Elizabeth encouraged Drake’s voyage around the world in search of new trading opportunities and plunder because she was seeking ways to bloody the Spanish without provoking war. If Drake’s actions ruffled too many Spanish feathers, she could claim that she had nothing to do with it.

Setting sail in 1577, Drake and his men sailed to Brazil, beheaded a minor nobleman on charges of witchcraft, and navigated the Strait of Magellan.

In Chile and Peru, Drake boarded Spanish treasure ships and stole their cargo. As his journey continued, he claimed what would become California for his queen, avoided huge crabs living on Pacific islands, and returned to England after first setting sail nearly three years earlier.

Drake brought home the century’s biggest haul of precious treasure; Elizabeth’s own share was bigger than the crown’s annual income. Drake’s voyage changed how the world perceived England, and England’s perception of itself as a world power.

It also humiliated the Spanish, who retaliated by sending the Spanish Armada to punish England. The English victory saved the country from a Spanish invasion, but less than a year later, it was the English Armada that tasted defeat at Spanish hands.

Drake fought against the Spanish Armada, but it is his daring and dangerous journey around the globe that has made him an unforgettable historical figure.

[To get a copy of this book, check your local library and local booksellers; or visit Amazon [here](#).]

This Week in History

September 5 917 - Liu Yan establishes the Southern Han state in the south of China, declaring himself emperor.

September 6 1566 - [Suleiman I](#), the Magnificent, dies while commanding an expedition to Hungary. He was 71.

September 7 1533 - Happy birthday to Elizabeth I, Queen of England, who was born upon this day.

September 8 1100 - Antipope Theodoric is elected in secret, but soon flees Rome and is captured and forced to become a hermit.

September 9 337 - Constantine I is succeeded by his three sons who divide the Roman Empire between them.

September 10 1573 - German pirate Klein Henszlein is beheaded in Hamburg, along with 33 of his crew.

September 11 1297 - William Wallace and Andrew Moray lead the Scots to defeat the English at the Battle of Stirling Bridge.

Cleftlands Officers' Contact Information

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- Iron Key: Lord Tryggr Gillason; ironkey@cleftlands.org
- Quartermaster: Lady Sarra Bossard; quartermaster@cleftlands.org

Upcoming Weekend Events of Note

- Sept 11 - Fletchings V: The Return Flight - a Cleftlands archery event at Punderson State Park. Learn more and pre-register: <http://fletchings.cleftlands.org>
- Sept 18 - Harvest Days - Xenia, OH. Learn more & pre-register: <https://wingedhills.wixsite.com/harvestdays>
- Sept 25 - Fall Coronation - Dekalb, IL. Learn more: <https://fallcoronation2021.carraigban.org/>
- Oct 2 - Red Dragon - London, OH. Learn more: <https://tirnewydd.midrealm.org/red-dragon/>
- Oct 16 - Crown Tournament - Danville, IN. Learn more: <https://sternfeld.midrealm.org/events/fallcrown/>
- Oct 23 - Regular Event: It's a Quest! - a Cleftlands event in Broadview Heights, OH. Learn more: <http://regular.cleftlands.org/>

Portrait photo of Syr Lorimer MacAltin credited to the MiddleWiki http://middlewiki.midrealm.org/index.php/Lorimer_MacAltin.

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