



## A Cleftlands (Middle Kingdom) Newsletter - 22 May 2023

### Events Explained - What Is Kingdom A&S?

by Lady Claricia de la Mere

In just a few days, Cleftlands will be hosting one of the biggest events of the year: Spring Crown Tourney and Kingdom A&S Fair. In our last issue, we gave an overview of Crown Tourney. In this issue we talk about the A&S Fair part.

Kingdoms across the Known World hold A&S Fairs to allow their artisans to show off what they can do, learn about their crafts, and exchange ideas with others. At the Kingdom A&S Fair in the Middle Kingdom, entrants register to display a project along with documentation on the historical origin and inspiration for the project, as well as their process as they worked to completion. Judges then review the work and documentation with the entrant and assign scores based on a pre-set rubric. Unlike what we might be used to at the county fair, you are not being judged against other people. Each project receives its own score, and there are usually no "first place" awards. Sometimes the scores will be used for things like determining champions at Pennsic, etc.



*A display from a previous Kingdom A&S.*

In the past there were Regional Fairs, which provided the same experience, but only with local people. Those who scored the highest (an overall rank of 1 or 2) qualified to go to the Kingdom Fair. There are no more official Regional Fairs (the one recently hosted by Cleftlands was unofficial), and the Kingdom A&S Fair is held only once a year, on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend. There is no longer a need to be qualified to enter the Kingdom Fair - anyone can do it who feels ready to present their work.

That being said, it's probably a good idea to know what you're getting into, and even have some practice at being judged and scored before you go to the Kingdom level. If you're interested, you can read all the rules [online](#):

All right, so what kind of project? First, you can enter either as an individual or a group. For example, you could sing a song as an individual, or do a choral performance as a group. Projects can be something from the three categories (Research, Made Object, or Performance ) that pertains to pre-17 century culture. The Fair is meant to showcase your skill and learning, so you may not want to choose something that you've never done before.

Oh, and if you're feeling up for an even bigger challenge, you can try for a Divisional. This is where the entrant submits not one, but three individual entries that are grouped together along a theme. An example Divisional entry might be a Tudor banquet presentation of a sugar sculpture, recorder performance, and research on entertainment that occurred at banquets in that period. Divisional entries are given an overall score in addition to individual scores.

Your project should be complete at the time of judging, so it's best to start your research six months to a year ahead of time (if not more). When deciding on your project, remember that anything that doesn't fit in a 3'x3' space needs special permission, and if you have something that involves alcohol or animals, it may not be allowed at the venue due to the site's restrictions. If your project doesn't fit, you can work with the staff to get feedback another way.

As you work on your project, make sure to take notes on your research and all your trials and tests in order to include this information in your final documentation. Judges like to see your process, including what you got wrong and learned from. If, in the course of your research you find something about the original that you do not want to emulate, such as the inclusion of an offensive verse in a song, or a dangerous ingredient in a food dish, you do not have to include it. In fact, there is a whole list of ingredients that are outright prohibited. You can also make changes that you feel are appropriate based on your research. Just document any alterations you choose and why you make them.

*Continued on page 2.*

# What Is Kingdom A&S - continued

Once your work is done, then it's time to write up your documentation. Documentation shows your original inspiration, any sources, your process, what you've learned - basically a research paper. If you are entering the Research category, then that's exactly what it is. For the other categories, what you put into your documentation will be focused around your work on the process. Don't forget to include pictures! There are a number of experts on documentation who could help you write up yours, like Master Milesent does an excellent class on the subject.

It's a good idea to review the scoring rubric for your category to see what the judges will be looking for and address those questions ahead of time. You can find those here: <https://library.midrealm.org/kmoas/asfair/>

Next, it's time to get ready for Fair day. Make sure you register by the deadline, then think about how you will present your work. Bring your project and at least 3 copies of your documentation (one for each judge - you may also want to bring one for yourself). Think about how you want to display your work. If you are doing a research project, you may want to go way back to your childhood science fair and do a display board, where you have pictures, graphs, etc. If you are presenting a dramatic reading, consider dressing in the garb of a performer of the same time period. For an object, you may want a tablecloth and accessories that look period for your display. It's always nice to include some versions of the work that were part of your process, or some ingredients that went into it. If you used period tools, you could bring those.

Note - it's always great if you use period tools and methods. However, you should never do anything that is unsafe or in any way harmful for you. Do the best that you can in the way that you can. This includes not spending money you don't want to spend on expensive tools and materials! You can include your reasoning in your documentation. Depending on what it is, it may have been something that the main crafts-person wouldn't have done in period anyway, and you can include documentation on that. Materials often came from a specialty merchant or crafts-person, one person didn't do everything - for example the head cook would purchase some spices already ground.

On the day of the Fair, you will be assigned a location to set up and given a judging time. It's a good idea to set up your project first thing, as many people like to walk around and look at all the awesome stuff during the day. Outside of your judging time, you can do other things - or even be a judge yourself! As long as you are at your station on time. The 3 judges will review your research and your work and ask questions. If they ask something that you didn't include in your documentation, that's okay, your verbal answers still count (and it's a great way to make notes on things you could improve for next time).

The judges tally their scores, and at the end of the day the top scores are announced and you will get your feedback returned to you. Then, you get ready for next year. Take a look around at the next Kingdom Fair and get an idea of how the whole process works - maybe next year it will be your project everyone is admiring!

For more tips of the entire process, the Midrealm Minister of Arts & Sciences, Maîtresse Audette la Tricoteuse de Saint Denis, has put together a wonderful guide - so don't just take my word for it! Learn [more](#).

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## News of the Barony

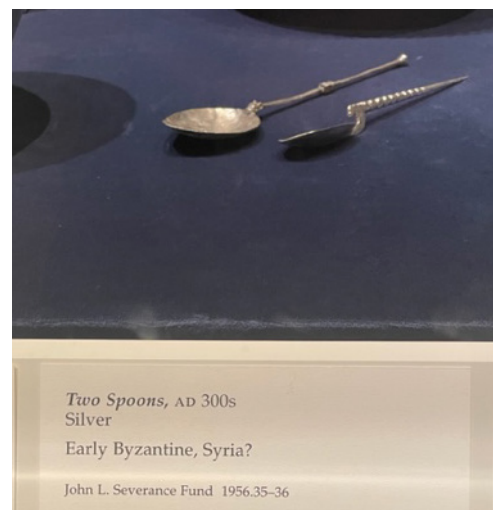
- The application to be the Barony's next Archery Marshal is up on the website: <http://www.cleftlands.org/officer-application/> Here's what Forester Cadfan had to say about the position:
  - As with your status of marshal-of-the-field you must have and maintain an active SCA membership.
  - You must be able to be active online in order to respond to email/Facebook messages.
  - You must be able to store the archery equipment that belongs to the Barony. The equipment takes up two pallets of floor space and includes frames, foam, archery net, etc.
  - You will attend Cleftlands Officer meetings and offer advice on proposed events, new officer applications, and other goings on in the Barony.
  - You will report quarterly to the Regional and Kingdom Archery Marshals.
  - Also, as a courtesy, you will usually be the first one asked to MIC an event. This does NOT mean you must be the MIC for every event.
  - I encourage you to make this position your own. Think of what you want to do with the position. What are the things you will do? What new ideas do you have? Whatever you will do, I know it will be great.
- Northern Oaken War Maneuvers is being held this year on June 10 (2 weeks after Crown!). You may camp on Saturday night if you make arrangements with the camp site. More: <https://events.cleftlands.org/nowm/>

# Pointers on Taking Photographs at Museums

by Baroness Aldermoureis "Alda" Ventzke, O.P.

I came back from Rome in 2022 with 4500 photos and 25% of them just armor; over 50% now filed under "Museums." Last year, out of 6000 photos, 3200 were museum items. Here are some pointers about photographing stuff in museums:

- 1. Turn off the damned flash!** That flash kicks you out of museums fast. Flashes get in the way of your photos because of glare. And your battery dies so much faster! At one (armor) museum, the docent surprised me by allowing me to use the cell phone's flashlight to light up items in the case. Here I could position the light where it didn't add glare but did add details. And we aren't even talking about what the extra light does to the items that you are photographing!
- 2. Go ahead and take those unexpected pictures** – the floor tile that would be fabulous as a scroll border, just the shoes from a painting because you want to make them!
- 3. Learn what camera settings work best for getting low light, high detail pictures.** For instance, my cameras work best with the Aperture Priority setting. But their shutter speeds get longer so I'm often looking for an unpainted marble column or something to lean against. And battery life is less.
- 4. Check out how good your cell phone is for museum pictures.** Cell phone cameras were once barely useful. Now, many of them do quite nicely – enough that some people no longer bring a separate camera at all. Keep an eye on your battery though since you may need a map to get to the hotel. Those archery skills for holding the bow steady (or with firearms, holding the rifle steady) carry over to holding the camera steady.
- 5. Sometimes, the less fancy museums may have more SCA-future-project related things.** The Museum of London displays more day-in-the-life types of artifacts than the British Museum.
- 6. Get in the habit of taking a picture of the object's caption before you take a picture of the object (or just after).** Even with the best intentions, you still come home with pictures labeled "Unidentified widget." Including the object number in the picture is a great thing. On the day you take the picture, you know the ring is #5 per documentation. A month later, you won't remember.
- 7. When viewing a loaded display case, spend a moment strategically scoping out the best order to photo each of the objects in the case.**
- 6. You have either multiple cameras or multiple batteries for your camera ...** and you are still finishing the day with hoping your cell phone has enough charge for the map to get you home.
- 7. Take pictures of book covers of books that interest you so you can buy them back at home because your luggage already has too much weight in it.**
- 8. When it isn't summer, I tend to go for black shirts to reduce glare.** When it is summer, it is too hot.
- 9. Lean the camera lens against the glass where possible to eliminate glare.**
- 10. Keep your fingerprints off the glass.** Rely on your fingernails to lean against the glass without leaving oil prints.
- 11. If the glare is real bad, take a larger picture but with the object of interest to the left or right and out of the way of glare.**
- 12. Back at home, crop the pictures to focus on the items.** This helps viewers give focus to the object. Viewers overlook the fantastic details when there is too much blank space – even if they can zoom in on it. Sometimes, however, you need to include items for a sense of scale.
- 13. Label your images.** I'll label museum pictures with something like: Museum of Medieval Livelihoods, Early style molded cup with embossed cat, S. Germany, 1200. If it is the caption, it is followed by "Info." Objects themselves are labeled 01, 02 ... I get the text from the caption cards I also photographed.
- 14. If you find something really cool, don't be shy about contacting the museum to ask if there is more information on that item.** The directors likely can write English and the worse they will say is No. The best is that they provide even more details (and possibly photos) of the item that piqued your interest. Having a picture of the caption for the object so you have their name and item number makes the request to the director that much more likely to get a response.





# 5 Questions for Cleftlanders - Know Your Officers: Lady Chaiya Leah bat Dovid, Youth Officer (mka Heidi Herman Smith)

## 1.) How did you get drawn into the SCA? What about it appeals to you?

Thorhalla! I have known Thorhalla for over 50 years, and I've known about her involvement in the SCA for many of those years. I just never had a chance to see what it was that she was involved with until she moved back here to Cleveland. What's drawn me in are the incredible people of Cleftlands. I love to hear how they have made their hobby into something more. I'm finding parts of myself that have been buried for far too long.

## 2.) What 2 activities are you most interested in participating in in the SCA?

I have been a crafter most of my life. I learned embroidery as a small child which led me to a love of all things involving fabric. I really would like to learn tablet weaving, as well as more advanced wire jewelry techniques.

## 3.) You recently stepped up to be the Barony's Youth Officer - what was it about the position that appealed to you?

Youth is the future of not only the SCA, but our country as well. Although we live medieval lives in the SCA, what we teach our youth now is what they can draw on as they become adults. Honor, patience, courtesy, chivalry are lessons that really never go out of style. I want to see more families bringing their children to meetings. I want to teach history to the youth in our Barony in a fun way, so that they can learn how much fun history can be. I want to bring more youth into our barony and by extension more active parents.

## 4.) What are your favorite SCA-related books?

I am a voracious reader, but I haven't found a lot of SCA related books yet to add to my bookshelf. I have a copy of The Medieval Tailor's Assistant that I am currently reading to get ideas for garb.

## 5.) What's a fun fact about you that you'd like everyone to know?

A fun fact that very few people know about me is my passion for baking, especially breads. There is something magical when you properly mix yeast, water, and flour together. I also love to make Christmas cookies and have been known to bake around 100 dozen cookies to give away as gifts.



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## News of the Society

- It has been decreed that there will be no War Points at this year's Pennsic War.
- Also at Pennsic, the Middle Kingdom is inviting all artisans of the Known World to attend the Crafter's Greens at Midrealm Royal. Learn more <https://tinyurl.com/Craftpersons-Green-Info>

## News of the Kingdom

- At the Kingdom A&S Fair on May 27, you may present a project to be considered for selection as Their Majesties' A&S Champion. The display will be set up alongside the Kingdom A&S pieces, or if you are participating in the Kingdom Fair, you may designate that you would like the same work considered for review in the champion selection.
- There will be a meeting for the Midrealm Order of the Pelican at the Kingdom A&S Fair on May 27 at 9am.
- In Red Spears, Sergeant Aislin de Tanet and Lord Leofric Dirksmeier were selected to be the next to wear the coronets.
- Sign up to retain for Their Royal Majesties at Crown Tournament: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050945a9af2da4f58-retaining5>
- Baronial polling is open for the Barony of Brendoken. Make your feelings known: <https://brendoken.midrealm.org/baronial-polling-a-s-lvii/>
- Baronial polling is also open for the Barony of Carraig Ban, not quite as close: <https://carraigban.midrealm.org/election/>

# Crown Tournament Combatants - Spring 2023

Congratulations to the combatants who will be fighting in Crown Tourney on May 28! Here is the list, with local Clefflanders (and adjacent) in bold:

- Viscount Kith von Atzinger fighting for Duchess Arianwen ferch Morgan
- **Count Nikolai Grigorevich Petrov fighting for Countess Serena Kimbalwyke**
- Count William of Fairhaven fighting for Countess Isolde de la Ramee
- Count Seto Gesshuko fighting for Astemari Zahra Tesfaye
- Sir Ixtlixochitl de los Indios fighting for Honorable Lady Norelle
- Master Aelf of Kingscrossing fighting for Mistress Gwyneth Banfhidhleir
- **Mistress Constanza de Mendoza fighting for Baron Syr Calum MacDhaibhidh**
- Sor Ustad Hasan al Hajjii fighting for Lady Lady Rowen Hen Enaid
- Sir Rodrigo Vargas de Leon fighting for Baroness Collette de Valois
- **Sir Crispin dela Rochefoucauld fighting for Excellency Gianna Vettori**
- THL Krzysztof cul Bun fighting for Metressa Alzbeta Michalik
- Lord GrimR Skallagrimson fighting for Dame Marie la Fauconniere
- **Sir Wigthegn the Younger fighting for Captain Neassa O'Cathasaigh**
- Rædesmann Andreas Blacwode fighting for Dame Maggie MacKeith
- Sir Criomhthann CuRua fighting for Baroness Sadb Ingen Neill
- Baron Miles Longfellow fighting for Maestra Katayoun al-Aurvataspa
- Captain Dyderich Wolfhart fighting for Maitress Odette d'Amboise
- **Captain Brice Calquhoun fighting for Mistress Brangwayn Snowden**
- Sir Sivrid Brumbach fighting for Lady Dorothea de Beckham
- THL Dawood al-Tayyib al-Samari fighting for THL Arianwen Triona Cerridwen o Wyndham
- Lord Algar Irenhend fighting for THL Seonaid inghean Ghriogair
- Lord Andreas Renardi fighting for Lady Chrysanthème des Prés
- **Sergeant Ávanger Håvardson fighting for Lady Adaline La Savonniere**



## Random Period Object - Cleveland Museum of Art

Eleven-Headed Guanyin, China, Late 600s

<https://www.clevelandart.org/art/1970.66>

Size: 24.75" tall

Wood

Guanyin is the bodhisattva of infinite compassion. A bodhisattva is a person who is able to reach nirvana, but does not go in order to help ease the suffering of others.

Here, Guanyin has a crown featuring a small Amida Buddha, the Buddha of Limitless Light. In Guanyin's left hand he holds a bottle which contains the nectar of life. The eleven heads allow him to have eyes and ears facing all directions, the better to detect those who might need his help.

The intricate carving shows a garment and jewelry of Indian design. The Museum is further studying this piece to make sure that it is from China and the stated time period.

## Upcoming Midrealm Events

**May 27-28 - Spring Crown Tournament and Kingdom A&S;** Crown tournament, A&S competition, armored, rapier, classes. \$20.

<https://events.cleftlands.org/crown>

**June 3 - Black Swam War Games;** Armored combat, rapier combat, A&S. \$15. Findlay, OH  
<https://marcheofthemarshes.midrealm.org/black-swamp-war-games/>

**June 3 - It Takes My Child to Raze a Village;** All sorts of activities for kids. \$20. Brighton, MI  
<https://www.scakids.org/>

**June 10 - Northern Oaken War Maneuvers;** Rapier and heavy melees. Ranged. Classes. Court. \$20. Wellington, OH  
<https://events.cleftlands.org/nowm/>

**June 16-18 - Baronial Border War;** Rapier and heavy combat. Ranged. Youth. A&S. \$20. Hastings, MI  
<https://sites.google.com/view/barony-of-andelcrag/baronial-border-wars-2023>

**June 16-18 - Ragnarok Rampage: Hel's Belles;** Rapier and heavy combat. Ranged. Youth. A&S. \$20. Dixon, IL  
<https://carraigban.midrealm.org/ragnarok-2023/>

**June 30-July 2 - Simple Day - A Simple Quest;** Rapier and heavy combat. Ranged. Youth. A&S. Youth. \$25 for the full weekend - includes lunch if you pre-register. Danville, IN  
<https://sternfeld.midrealm.org/simple-day/>

## May-June 2023 Cleftlands Events

- Wed. May 24 7:00-9:45pm - **Baronial Meeting** - St John of the Cross School, 140 Richmond Rd, Cleveland OH 44143.
- Thurs. May 25 7:00pm - **Armors' Guild Meeting** - Ealdred & Clairiel's Garage: 234 Adams St, Berea, OH 44017; <https://bit.ly/3vBVzBR>
- Fri. May 26 10:00am-4:00pm - **Garb-a-Thon** - Warrensville Heights Library Get details on the Facebook event: [Link](#)
- Wed. May 31 7:00-9:45pm - **Baronial Dessert Revel - Armored Tournament** - St John of the Cross School, 140 Richmond Rd, Cleveland OH 44143.
- Thurs. June 1 7:00pm - **Armors' Guild Meeting** - Ealdred & Clairiel's Garage: 234 Adams St, Berea, OH 44017; <https://bit.ly/3vBVzBR>
- Fri June 2 10:00am-4:00pm - **Garb-a-Thon** - Richmond Heights Branch Library. Get details on the Facebook event: [Link](#)
- Sat June 3 10:30am-4:00pm - **Garb-a-Thon** - Twinsburg Public Library. Get details on the Facebook event: [Link](#)
- Wed. June 7 7:00-9:45pm - **Baronial Meeting** - St John of the Cross School, 140 Richmond Rd, Cleveland OH 44143.
- Thurs. June 8 7:00pm - **Armors' Guild Meeting** - Ealdred & Clairiel's Garage: 234 Adams St, Berea, OH 44017; <https://bit.ly/3vBVzBR>
- Fri June 9 10:00am-4:00pm - **Garb-a-Thon** - Cuyahoga County Public Library. Get details on the Facebook event: [Link](#)
- Wed. June 14 7:00-9:45pm - **Baronial Meeting** - St John of the Cross School, 140 Richmond Rd, Cleveland OH 44143.
- Thurs. June 15 7:00pm - **Armors' Guild Meeting** - Ealdred & Clairiel's Garage: 234 Adams St, Berea, OH 44017; <https://bit.ly/3vBVzBR>
- Fri June 16 10:00am-4:00pm - **Garb-a-Thon** - South Euclid Lyndhurst Public Library. Get details on the Facebook event: [Link](#)
- Wed. June 21 7:00-9:45pm - **Baronial Meeting** - St John of the Cross School, 140 Richmond Rd, Cleveland OH 44143.
- Thurs. June 22 7:00pm - **Armors' Guild Meeting** - Ealdred & Clairiel's Garage: 234 Adams St, Berea, OH 44017; <https://bit.ly/3vBVzBR>
- Fri June 23 10:00am-4:00pm - **Garb-a-Thon** - Mayfield Branch Library. Get details on the Facebook event: [Link](#)

*Society Disclaimer: Although the SCA complies with all applicable laws 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.*

### Newsletter Content

Did you miss an issue? Want to review an old favorite? All copies of the newsletter are stored on the Cleftlands website. Find them here: <http://wiki.cleftlands.org/Publications>

If you have an idea for content, please contact me: [clariciadlm@gmail.com](mailto:clariciadlm@gmail.com).

Thank you and stay well!



# Cleftlands Officers' Contact Information

- Baron: Barone Pietro Nicolo da San Tebaldo; [baron@cleftlands.org](mailto:baron@cleftlands.org)
- Baroness: Baronessa Aurelia Rosetti; [baroness@cleftlands.org](mailto:baroness@cleftlands.org)
- Seneschal: Mistress Angharad ferch Tangwystl; [seneschal@cleftlands.org](mailto:seneschal@cleftlands.org)
- Exchequer: The Honorable Robert atte Northclyfe; [exchequer@cleftlands.org](mailto:exchequer@cleftlands.org)
- Castellan (Chatelaine)/Gold Key: Rav Ezra Ha-Yona; [chatelaine@cleftlands.org](mailto:chatelaine@cleftlands.org)
- Herald: Sergeant Njall Orkneyjarson; [herald@cleftlands.org](mailto:herald@cleftlands.org)
- Minister Arts & Sciences: Dame Elizabethe Alles; [moas@cleftlands.org](mailto:moas@cleftlands.org)
- Social Media Officer: Lord Hrafnkell inn Raudi Eykelsson; [social@cleftlands.org](mailto:social@cleftlands.org)
- Knight's Marshal: Baroness Constanza de Mendoza; [knightsmarshal@cleftlands.org](mailto:knightsmarshal@cleftlands.org)
- Rapier Marshal: Lord Reinhardt mit dem Bart; [rapiermarshal@cleftlands.org](mailto:rapiermarshal@cleftlands.org)
- Archery Marshal: Forester Cadfan of the Autumn Wood; [archery@cleftlands.org](mailto:archery@cleftlands.org)
- Web Minister: Baroness Gianna Vettori; [webminister@cleftlands.org](mailto:webminister@cleftlands.org)
- Chronicler: The Honorable Lady Jolicia atte Northclyfe; [chronicler@cleftlands.org](mailto:chronicler@cleftlands.org)
- Youth Officer: Lady Chaiya Leah bat Dovid; [youth@cleftlands.org](mailto:youth@cleftlands.org)
- Demo Coordinator: Lady Shahzada al-Zahra; [demo@cleftlands.org](mailto:demo@cleftlands.org)
- Iron Key: Lord Tryggr Gillason; [ironkey@cleftlands.org](mailto:ironkey@cleftlands.org)
- Youth Marshal: Sergeant Bastian Eychener; [youthmarshal@cleftlands.org](mailto:youthmarshal@cleftlands.org)
- Quartermaster: The Honorable Lady Sarra Bossard; [quartermaster@cleftlands.org](mailto:quartermaster@cleftlands.org)

## This Week in History

- May 21 1471 - King Henry VI of England dies "of melancholia" while a prisoner at the Tower of London. When his body was exhumed in 1910, the head was bloodied and there was damage to the skull, suggesting assassination.
- May 22 1520 - Spaniards massacre Aztec elites during the festival of Toxcatl, claiming they wanted to stop a ritual sacrifice. The Aztecs say that their motive was greed, coveting the gold their people wore. This turned the Aztecs against the Spanish conquerors, who were driven out of the city, losing most of their men.
- May 23 1566 - The Eighty Years War begins when Dutch rebels revolt against Spanish rule.
- May 24 1218 - The Fifth Crusade leaves Acre, bound for Egypt.
- May 25 1085 - Toledo (Spain) is taken from the Moors by Alfonso VI of Castile.
- May 26 1293 - An earthquake in Kamakura, Japan, kills 23,024, and gives cover to a purge where the local regent, Hōjō Sadatoki, killed about 90 followers of his rival and subordinate, Taira no Yoritsuna.
- May 27 1257 - Richard of Cornwall is crowned King of the Romans, (a title given to kings in Germany) after being elected to the position.

*Photo of spoons from the Cleveland Museum of Art is from Lady Claricia de la Mere*

*Portrait of Lady Chaiya at Winter War Maneuvers and the A&S Display from 2015 are used courtesy of Master Phillip the Pilgrim.*

*The image of the Eleven-Headed Guanyin is courtesy of the Cleveland Museum of Art. As of January 23, 2019, the Cleveland Museum of Art is an Open Access institution, using the Creative Commons Zero (CC0) designation for high-resolution images and data related to its collection. This means the public now has the ability to share, collaborate, remix, and reuse images of many as 30,000 public-domain artworks from the CMA's world-renowned collection—all without asking permission. In addition, portions of collections information (metadata) for more than 61,000 artworks, both in the public domain and those works with copyright or other restrictions, are now available.*

*This is a publication of the Barony of the Cleftlands, part of the Middle Kingdom of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc.. This is the May 22, 2023 issue of Internebbles, a publication of the Barony of the Cleftlands of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (SCA, Inc.). Internebbles is edited by and available from Karin Strippel ([clariciadlm@gmail.com](mailto:clariciadlm@gmail.com)). It is not a corporate publication of SCA, Inc., and does not delineate SCA, Inc. policies. Copyright © 2023 Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. For information on reprinting photographs, articles, or artwork from this publication, please contact the Chronicler, who will assist you in contacting the original creator of the piece. Please respect the legal rights of our contributors.*