



## A Cleftlands (Middle Kingdom) Newsletter - 4 September 2023

### Pennsic 50, Through a Lens

*Article and photos by Lord Tarmach ben Yehuda al-Khazari*

By the last days of this, the fiftieth Pennsic War, it all looked quite familiar.

The number of participants, rumored to become nearly 15,000, was just under 11,400 (officially), about the same number of people on-site as there would be before the Pandemic. Combatants and artisans, merchants and musicians. Competitions. The tents, the walking, the dust, the heat, and the rain. Celebrations. Laughter. Smiles.

Familiar old friends. But delight was in the details...

There were many reminders of just how long this has been going on -- numerals marked on t-shirts, medallions, and of course Mt. Eislinn. A History Hall was open for two days, offering a glimpse, through artifacts and images, the changes wrought by time to the site and what we did there. These, in turn, drew stories from the Hall's visitors -- I had the privilege of a 15-minute conversation with a woman who, as it turned out, was Queen of the East at Pennsic 1 (Cariodoc's wife). Others were telling stories about Wars they'd attended since before Cooper's Lake became the Pennsic location.



*Cleftlands gathers for Opening Ceremonies at Pennsic 50.*

There was a small contingent of participants, perhaps fewer than a dozen, who had traveled from China, looking every bit as if they had stepped out of a history book. At Midrealm Court, a gentleman was honored as the only person to have fought in a battle at Every. Pennsic. War.

Mistress Angharad Ferch Tangwystl was placed on Vigil to be made a Pelican, a request made to the Court by Baron Sir Calum. And before that, Marc Ren-garth was placed on Vigil to be made a Laurel, both elevations viewed by many as long overdue.

There were many names on the memorial ship this year, and others missed because the journey has become too difficult. And there were many young faces, and young families, the faces of the second and third generations of Pennsic people, that assure the continuance



*Mistress Angharad being put on vigil for the Order of the Pelican.*

of this much-loved event.

For the foreseeable future, Pennsic will continue to be the Home-coming.



*Lady Genevra guards the Midrealm Royal camp.*

# Pennsic 50 by the Numbers

by Lady Claricia de la Mere

This Pennsic 50 was expected to be big, and it was - although perhaps not quite as big as rumors made it out to be. The final headcount was 11,384, which is certainly more than in many years, but not close to the record attendance set at Pennsic 29 (August 5-20, 2000) of 12,001. To see an overview of Pennsics past, you can go to the website: <https://www.pennsicwar.org/2023/04/pennsics-history-and-future/>

This war was also unique, as it was decided that no war points would be counted, so there was no official "winner." There were still alliances:

Kingdoms who allied with the East: AEthelmearc, the West, Caid, Ansteorra, Outlands, Calontir, Trimaris, Drachenwald, Artemesia, and Lochac. Also the Kingdom of Acre, which is a non-SCA offshoot of the East Kingdom. The Great Dark Horde sided with those who traveled the farthest, which meant Lochac and the East. The second-farthest was a contingent from China, who declared for the Eastern alliance as well.

You might then think that the remaining Kingdoms all allied with the Middle, and while that's mostly true (Atenveldt, Meridies, Atlantia, Northshield, Ealdomere, Avacal, Glenn Abhann), An Tir decided to do things a little differently. The Baronies of An Tir could choose who they fought with. The Tuchux, always doing things differently, fought with the Midrealm.

Reported results were a little more sparse this year, but here is the list this correspondent could find:

- In heavy combat, the Midrealm won all 5 bridge battles and the Woods Battle.
- The Middle Kingdom was also victorious in the rapier field battle
- Duke Edmund won the rapier bear pit tourney.
- Out of 106 entrants, a Midrealmer won the rapier Rose Tourney (Raphael DiMerisi for Duchess Vukasin).
- The Baronial championship, while a smaller field of 38, was won by the Midrealm's Fatima bint Malik of the Barony of Red Spears.
- At the archery champions' shoots, the Midrealm and allies won 2 of the 3 scenarios (the walk-through shoot and the friend/foe shoot) to bring the Midrealm and friends victory again.

And what ABOUT those archery champions? It should not surprise you to know that many Cleftlanders and local friends made that team: Forester Gwyneth Cole, Forester Muldonny McVriw, Forester Cadfan, Forester Darkstone, and Lord Dafydd Myddleton. Well done!

Darkstone then went on to place in the top 10 at the Ullr's Revenge Novelty Shoot - out of 164 archers!

Celebrity sighting: Tryggr is that you on page 11 of the Thursday edition of the Pennsic Independent? You can see past issues of the Pennsic Independent with a subscription, if you simply must know. Purchase your subscription here: <https://the-pennsic-independent.square.site/>



*Left to right, the Kings of AEthelmearc, the East, and the Middle's King Louis starting things off by blowing the traditional Pennsic War Horn.*

# My First Pennsic - An Up-and-Down Experience

by Lady Lauretta de' Bardi

I joined the SCA when I first moved to Cleveland over six years ago. And there always seemed to be one word perennially on the minds of everyone in the SCA here: Pennsic. When my sister from Alaska announced that she and her husband were attending Pennsic this year, there was finally nothing really stopping me from attending. And finally I would get to see firsthand what all the Pennsic craze was about. So, I went.

I will spoil the suspense somewhat now by saying that Pennsic was a very up and down experience for me, and very financially costly in the end. I thought of cutting my stay short a number of times along the way. Some things might possibly have been avoided by better planning, whereas some other things might have been inevitable on my budget. I will include the negative as well as the positive so that perhaps others may not make the same mistakes.

So, the day arrived. Matters were complicated by the fact that I had promised to pick my sister, Lareena (Merewin) and my brother-in-law, Khevron, up in Pittsburgh and bring them to Pennsic with me. We didn't arrive until quite late. It was already too late to pitch my tent. So the West Kingdom Camp, which is where we were all camping at, quite generously allowed me to spend the night in one of the rental tents that was not scheduled to be occupied yet. It was quite spacious.

The next day I became severely nauseated. I eventually wondered if I was dehydrated, since I had suffered similarly from dehydration before. The last thing I wanted to do was to drink anything, but I finally forced myself to sip at some water. That proved to be the answer, and eventually I recovered. I had learned how easy it was to get dehydrated, even when it seemed relatively cool and had been freezing cold (figuratively speaking) the night before. Hydration is very important at Pennsic, so I cut out a lot of the classes I had planned to go to just so that I could go back to camp and rehydrate.

After a few days, I was more accustomed to camping, and things went more smoothly. I got to attend some really nice classes. Among my favorites were a Ukrainian folk song class, a Chinese calligraphy class, and a Chinese chess class, though I enjoyed most of my classes quite a lot.

Gladius suggested I check out a Japanese camp near his in the Bog, so I did. The camp is called Tengu Sanji. They have a torii – a gate to Japanese spiritual places – out in Cooper's Lake, and they take part in the burning of the Viking ship. The people at Tengu Sanji were really nice and invited me to a party of theirs. They also said I could camp with them in the future if I wanted. I sat and talked with them for a while.

The people of the West Kingdom Camp were generally quite nice to me indeed. A few of them went out of their way to help ease me out of my shell, and it must have helped, because I feel a lot less anxiety in social settings than I have for many years. I enjoyed myself so much with them that I took them up on their invitation to march with them in the Opening Ceremonies. I ended up with three Facebook friends from the West Kingdom Camp, and some of them were truly fascinating people.

Many mistakes were made that I learned from, and others might be able to as well. First of all, I brought too much stuff. I only had a four-person dome tent to stay in, so I had to take much of my stuff back to my car because it just wouldn't fit inside the tent. I had to store all my tote bins outside the tent because there just simply didn't seem to be room inside the tent. This is probably what led to some \$50 worth of protein bars disappearing from one of my totes. At Jolicia's insistence, I brought the totes inside my tent. I was surprised they even fit. There was just barely enough room now for me to get into the tent at all. But it was great experience at Tetris-ing in a tiny space.

Meanwhile, upon learning of the disappearance of my protein bars, there was a tremendous outpouring of assistance, sympathy, and replacement food by others.

*Continued on page 4.*



*Mistress Zuriel (of Cleftlands) and House Darkyard (not of Cleftlands) bring the War Horn to Opening Ceremonies that will signal the War's "official" start.*

## My First Pennsic - continued

A friend at Gladius's camp gave me a bulging sack of food, the West Kingdom Camp captain gave me quite a bit of food, and the Queen of the West gave me some replacement protein bars. I had been wanting to just leave Pennsic at that point, but everyone's overwhelming kindness changed my mind.

I also lost over four hours over three days trying to get my medications straightened out. If you are ever going to travel much at all, do NOT, I repeat do NOT, go with any mail order or courier-only pharmacy. Go only with national pharmacy chains that can fill your medications locally. Trying to get mail order pharmacies to give up your re-fills to any other pharmacy is like pulling wisdom teeth. And be mindful that only one vacation override – or any override of any kind – is allowed per year for each medication.



*The Cleftlands armored combatants after battle. One Cleftlands fighter also wrote a first-person account of her time at Pennsic, including what it's like to fight there - read the latest blog from THL Lyonnete (Marie Vibbert, kneeling center in red): <https://www.marievibbert.com/pennsic-50/>*

My egress from Pennsic was an unmitigated disaster. First of all, there was the tent and the cot inside. The tent was sopping wet from heavy rain, and Gladius insisted that we leave the tent up so it could dry out first, as the weather was supposed to be sunny that day. I stared at the tent, not wanting to part with it. I had the strange feeling I might never see it again, or at least not as soon as I would like to. When Gladius showed up to fetch the tent, it, as well as everything and everyone else in the camp, had vanished. I finally discovered that the tent and the cot had been safely stored in West Kingdom Camp storage, which means they will be completely inaccessible for another year.

But the biggest disaster of all for me for my first Pennsic was that all of the medications I took as well as refilled there are now nowhere to be found. They have just completely disappeared into thin air. So here's another lesson learned – and this goes for any kind of travel – **ONLY TAKE THE MEDS YOU NEED.**

All told, I am probably glad that I went to Pennsic, as there were some really nice moments, and I got to spend some exceedingly rare time with my emotionally closest but geographically most distant member of my family, along with my brother-in-law. However, I think in future I will only consider attending Pennsic if I can stay in a building off-site, for the myriad reasons mentioned above. Pennsic was a great learning and growing experience for me and, with certain given caveats, I highly recommend it as quite a worthwhile experience for others.

## News of the Barony

- Please note that the format of weekly Baronial meetings is changing. Meetings will start at 6:30 (instead of 7), with A&S activities at 7 and another A&S session at 8:30. Business meeting will be at 8 pm.
- The archery event Fletchings: Fall Flight and the tournament for Baronial archery champion have both been postponed until spring.
- Cleftlands submitted a bid to Kingdom to host Fall Coronation on September 28, 2024, again at the Ashtabula County Fairgrounds. It awaits approval.
- Congratulations to Mistress Angharad who was elevated to the Order of the Pelican at Brendokenfest.
- Congratulations also to Baron Pietro who was given the Order of the Bronze Ring also at Brendokenfest.
- Event bids are being accepted for 2024, such as for Regular Event, NOWM, and Standard Bearer's.
- On Sunday, October 1, there will be a Baronial field trip to see the Cleveland Museum of Art's illumination and print exhibit "Love Gardens/Forbidden Fruit." Meet at the atrium at noon. No ticket needed.
- There will be Noblesse Largesse and "Everything and a Cookie" exchanges at Yule Revel. See Mistress Thorhalla for details on Noblesse Largesse and Dame Elizabethe for details on the cookie-not-a-cookie exchange.

# News of the Society

- Society job openings: Deputy for Target Archery and Deputy for Thrown Weapons. <https://www.sca.org/news/be-on-target-deputy-society-marshals-wanted/>
- In July, specifics about how membership data is stored and protected were discussed in an update found here: <https://www.sca.org/news/security-of-membership-data/>
- If you did not get the message, digital membership cards are available and can be saved to your phone's Wallet app. There is more information in this article, including a link to an FAQ: <https://www.sca.org/news/digital-membership-cards-are-here/>
- The SCA now offers merchandise, see what's available here: <https://the-sca.printify.me/products>
- The Society Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Officer issued a long missive in July. If you haven't read it and are interested in recruitment in the SCA or DEIB, you may want to check it out to see what his plans are: <https://www.sca.org/news/2023-q2-board-meeting-deib-impacting-decisions/>
- Maestra Arabella da Siena, OP was named the next Society Marshal. Learn more about this amazing woman here: <https://www.sca.org/news/people-on-the-move-marshal-of-the-society-society-marshal/>
- The Board is seeking more nominations. Read more: <https://www.sca.org/news/nominate-now-for-the-sca-inc-board-of-directors/>
- Commentary is requested by November 1 on a proposed by-law change regarding Director selection: <https://www.sca.org/news/commentary-request-proposed-by-law-change-director-selection/>
- Commentary by Nov 1 is also requested regarding a proposed Corpora change regarding Crown list refusal; where previously an entrant might be refused for any reason, this proposed change would require just cause stated in writing: <https://www.sca.org/news/commentary-request-proposed-corpora-change-crown-list-refusal/>
- The July 2023 President's report is available: <https://www.sca.org/news/july-2023-presidents-report-available/>



## Random Period Object - Cleveland Museum of Art

Platter; France, 1510-1589

<https://www.clevelandart.org/art/1986.57>

Size: ~19.33" x 15.75"

Earthenware with lead glaze.

This platter is one of several done in similar "rustic" style at the Cleveland Museum of Art. This platter is attributed to the "circle of Bernard Palissy", and was made either by Palissy himself or one of his imitators. Palissy was a famed ceramicist, although he did not begin

there. He did other work until he became fascinated with a white enameled cup, possibly Chinese porcelain, and became determined to recreate it.

He spent 16 years trying, driving his family to poverty, and ultimately failed. Instead, he created his own style of rustic pottery, which was so popular that it was copied well into the 1700s, and revived again later in the 1800s.

He used colored lead glazes on the reliefs mimicking wildlife from his home in the Saintonge marshes. Fish, reptiles, ferns, flowers - many of these were made from casts of real specimens (the animals being dead). His work impressed the Duc de Montmorency, and he was later brought to Paris under the protection of Catherine des Medicis.

This protection was important because Palissy was a Huguenot (Protestant), when France was Catholic. He was very outspoken in his beliefs, whether on religion or science, and even the protection he'd gained couldn't help him forever. He was thrown in the Bastille and died there in 1590, at the age of 80, after a long and colorful life.

## Upcoming Midrealm Events

**September 8-10 - Baroness Wars X;** Rapier and heavy combat. Ranged. Bardic. A&S. Camping. Food on site. \$15. Taylorville, IL  
<https://swordcliff.midrealm.org/events/baroness-wars-x/>

**September 9 - Harvest Days XXXIX;** Rapier and heavy combat. Ranged. Bardic. Classes. Camping. \$20. Xenia, OH  
<https://wingedhills.wixsite.com/harvestdays>

**September 16 - Pferdestadt Rapier Classic;** Rapier. Free, includes lunch. Caledonia, OH  
<https://pferdestadt.midrealm.org/pferdestadt-rapier-classic/>

**September 16 - Fiesta De San Miguel.** Heavy and rapier tournaments. Brewing competition. Feast. Dance. \$10. Lansing, MI.  
<https://ealdnordwuda.midrealm.org/2023/fiesta-de-san-miguel/>

**September 23 - Fall Coronation.** Heavy and rapier combat. Ranged. Classes. Merchants. Court. Feast. \$14. Greenfield, OH.  
<https://middlemarches.midrealm.org/events/fall-coronation-2023/>

**Sep. 29-Oct 1 - Vikings Come Home.** Heavy. Ranged. A&S. Kubb tournament. Youth. Camping (additional charge). \$20. Lake City, MI  
<https://www.donnershafen.com/vikings-come-home>

**September 30 - Brawl at the Crooked Dragon.** Heavy. Rapier. Thrown weapons. Tournaments. Tavern brawl. Donations welcome. Oberlin, OH.  
<https://falconsquarry.midrealm.org/brawl/>

## September 2023 Cleftlands Events

- Wed. September 6 6:30-9:45pm - **Baronial Meeting** - St John of the Cross School, 140 Richmond Rd, Cleveland OH 44143.
- Thurs. September 7 7:00pm - **Armors' Guild Meeting** - Ealdred & Clairiel's Garage: 234 Adams St, Berea, OH 44017; <https://bit.ly/3vBVzBR>
- Tues., Sept 12, 7:30pm - **Needleworkers' Guild Meeting** - Critical Hit Games; 13433 Cedar Rd, Cleveland Heights OH 44118.
- Wed. September 13 6:30-9:45pm - **Baronial Meeting** - St John of the Cross School, 140 Richmond Rd, Cleveland OH 44143.
- Thurs. September 14 7:00pm - **Armors' Guild Meeting** - Ealdred & Clairiel's Garage: 234 Adams St, Berea, OH 44017; <https://bit.ly/3vBVzBR>
- Wed. September 20 6:30-9:45pm - **Baronial Meeting** - St John of the Cross School, 140 Richmond Rd, Cleveland OH 44143.
- Wed. Sept. 20 7:30pm - **Class at Baronial Meeting: Making a Snood** - St John of the Cross School, 140 Richmond Rd, Cleveland OH 44143.
- Thurs. September 21 7:00pm - **Armors' Guild Meeting** - Ealdred & Clairiel's Garage: 234 Adams St, Berea, OH 44017; <https://bit.ly/3vBVzBR>
- Tues., Sept 26, 7:30pm - **Needleworkers' Guild Meeting** - Critical Hit Games; 13433 Cedar Rd, Cleveland Heights OH 44118.
- Wed. Sept. 27 6:30-9:45pm - **Baronial Dessert Revel** - St John of the Cross School, 140 Richmond Rd, Cleveland OH 44143.
- Thurs. September 28 7:00pm - **Armors' Guild Meeting** - Ealdred & Clairiel's Garage: 234 Adams St, Berea, OH 44017; <https://bit.ly/3vBVzBR>
- Sun. Oct 1 12:00pm - **CMA Field Trip: Love Gardens/Forbidden Fruit Exhibit** - Cleveland Museum of Art: 11150 East Blvd, Cleveland. Meet in the atrium, no ticket needed.

### Newsletter Content

Did you miss an issue? Want to review the information of issues past? 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!

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## Previous Week in History

- Aug 27 1232 - The first Japanese legal code governing the samurai class, the Goseibai Shikimoku, is proclaimed.
- Aug 28 1565 - The oldest continuously occupied European-established city in the area of the continental United States is founded in St. Augustine, Florida, on the former site of a Timucua village.
- Aug 29 1350 - England's fleet of smaller ships defeats a Castilian force at the Battle of Winchelsea (part of the Hundred Years' War).
- Aug 30 1420 - Tsunamis batter Chile, Hawaii, Japan and other regions after a 9.4 M<sub>s</sub>-strong earthquake hits Chile's Atacama Region.
- Aug 31 1056 - [Empress Theodora](#), last Byzantine ruler of the Macedonian dynasty, dies at age 76 after ruling in her own right for 16 months.
- Sep 1 1173 - Stamira, a widow of the Italian state of Ancona, sacrifices herself to light a barrel of pitch and distract the army besieging her city to allow a party to escape and get food. This allowed them to hold out until allies arrived.
- Sept 2 31 BC - Octavian, Rome's 1st emperor, defeats Mark Antony & Cleopatra's forces at the Battle of Actium.

*Photos in the issue are used with gratitude to Lord Tarmach ben Yehuda al-Khazari.*

*The image of the French earthenware Platter 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.*

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