



A Cleftlands (Middle Kingdom) Newsletter - 1/24/2021

News of the Realm

SCA News -

- The Board will be live-streaming the January 24, 2024 meeting via GoToWebinar: <https://www.sca.org/news/january-2021-bod-meeting-goes-live/>
- The agenda for the January 24 meeting can be found here: <https://www.sca.org/news/agenda-for-january-24-2021-board-of-directors-meeting-available/>
- Dale Fong-Frederick (Sir Jibril al-Dakhil) has been announced as Director-Elect to Seat D, taking over the position from John St. Dennis (Baron Lorcan Dracontius) at the close of the April 2021 quarterly meeting: <https://www.sca.org/news/people-on-the-move-director-elect-seat-d/>
- The SCA College of Arms will be hosting virtual Heralds Point events for 3 weeks starting January 24. Sign up for a time slot to consult and work on getting your heraldry, name, or badge registered: <http://heraldry.sca.org/heraldspoint/>
- Note that Pennsic University is planning on opening THING for teacher registrations - classes are planned for both in-person and virtually, to be prepared should Pennsic be canceled. Stay tuned for updates.

Kingdom News

- The winner of my Twelfth Night A&S competition was the German Brickstitch, by Lady Margaret of Hollingford, CW: <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=10108555714351780&set=a.10108555014624040>

Baronial News

- Usually this time of year Cleftlands is buzzing with preparations for Regular Event. Unfortunately it will be a little while before we get together again in person, but Regular Event will be there waiting for us on October 23 with "A Quest for Regular Event."
- In the meantime, we'll be running a newsletter special feature on favorite memories from Regular Events in the past. Please send in your memories and photos to clariciadlm@gmail.com - and thanks!

What is Candlemas?

By Lady Claricia de la Mere

You may have seen events around this time of year with a "Candlemas" theme, but may not know the history behind it. Candlemas, or Candlemass, is also known as the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus Christ, or the Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary. It occurs on February 2, 40 days after Christmas. This is the last feast of the Christmas cycle. Some traditions wait until then to bring down their Christmas decorations.

The celebration is based on the tales that Mary, in obedience to Jewish law, went to the Temple in Jerusalem to be purified and present her firstborn to God. A woman was purified by presenting a lamb as a burnt offering, and a pigeon or dove as a sin offering. This happened 33 days after a boy's circumcision, which was 7 days after his birth. Different traditions now focus on different aspects: the East celebrates it primarily as the presentation of Jesus, while the West focuses on the purification of the Virgin Mary.

This feast is one of the oldest in Catholicism. It has been celebrated since the 4th century in certain places, chiefly Jerusalem, and then spread. Since Christmas had been celebrated on December 25 from 354 AD (fixed there by Pope Liberius), the date of February 2 should have been fixed, but Candlemas was moved to February 14. Justinian I moved it back to the date it is at today.

Continued on page 2.

Candlemas - continued

So why "Candle-mass"? By the middle of the 5th century, the custom of observing the festival with lighted candles had developed. Christians brought, and still bring, candles to their local church to be blessed. To them, blessed candles symbolize Jesus Christ as the "Light of the World". This practice was frowned upon after the Reformation, with Archbishop Thomas Cranmer declaring that no candles would be used at Candlemas 1548.

During the Middle Ages, members of craft guilds put on pageants with candles and paraded through the streets. Some towns had other entertainment or held communal feasts.

There have been some associations with the ancient festival of Lupercalia. Lupercalia was possibly pre-Roman, but was celebrated in Rome in the middle of February to purify the city of evil spirits and release health and fertility. The name "February" comes from another name of the festival: "dies Februatus" after the instruments used in purification, called "februa."

Lupercalia was marked on a calendar in 354 along with Christian festivals, and continued to be celebrated even after banning such events in 391. While some have thought that Pope Gelasius replaced Lupercalia with Candlemas, no evidence shows that this was a purposeful action. It may have happened that the purification elements of both events merged on their own, as the pagan activities became less practiced.

Lupercalia isn't the only pagan celebration to be associated with this time. Imbolc (or Imbolg), also called St. Brigid's Day, is a traditional Gaelic festival celebrated on or around February 1 to mark the beginning of spring. It was originally associated with the goddess Brigid, who was Christianized into a saint. Brigid would visit a house that made a bed for her, and she would bless food, drink, and clothing left outside.

Imbolc may be older than even Lupercalia, as passage tombs in Ireland that were built in the Neolithic period (12,000 years ago) are aligned with the sunrise on this date. Fire and purification are an important part of Imbolc, making all three events share themes of purity and light. All three celebrations also hold a female central figure: Brigid for Imbolc, Juno for Lupercalia, and Mary at Candlemas.

In addition to blessing candles, Candlemas is celebrated with crepes or pancakes. This association came from Pope Gelasius distributing pancakes to pilgrims back in the 5th century, but has another link to Lupercalia: Vestal Virgins would make offerings of meal cakes at that time. Pancakes may also represent the sun's return, as they are round and golden. People would flip the crepes with the right hand and hold a coin in their left hand to bring prosperity for the rest of the year. Or, they might place the first crepe made on top of an armoire to keep away sadness and loss. Supposedly the crepe would never get moldy!

Sources:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Candlemas>

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Candlemas>

<https://www.tudorsociety.com/candlemas/>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lupercalia>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imbolc>

Virtual Classes for January 24 through February 7:

- Sunday January 24 7-9pm EST - Four Stitch Techniques with Adriana la Bretonne: <https://www.facebook.com/events/448966192774354>
- Monday January 25 7-9pm EST - Medieval & Renaissance Textiles, an Overview of Pattern and Color with Baroness Alexis MacAlister OL, OP (Trimaris): <https://www.facebook.com/events/403473394307336>
- Tuesday January 26 8pm EST - A Shot of Division V, Brewing in A&S with Verena Entenwirth: <https://www.facebook.com/events/3843247992353465>
- Wednesday January 27 7pm EST - Cree Language with Lord Rojhon the Wanderer: <https://www.facebook.com/events/138922841179218>
- Sunday February 7 7pm EST - Equestrian Games in the SCA with Captain CuMhara o'Holyhead: <https://www.facebook.com/events/477750913213491>

For the Combat & Ranged Arts

Armored: Duke Eik's Videos:
Distance and Timing Fun:
https://youtu.be/NNI03XC_B84

Polearm Butt Spike Use:
<https://youtu.be/xMbTbIK34f8>

Dane Axe Special Kata:
<https://youtu.be/MAoW-GW5EA20>

RUM: How to Understand
the Mind of Your Fencing
Student(RUM):
<https://youtu.be/b0zLcTlqcls>

A Look at the Knightly Vir-
tues (RUM):
<https://youtu.be/ErSLTUpBgBc>

SMACK Talk 1 (Sword Manu-
als and Theory Behind Fight
Approach) (RUM):
<https://youtu.be/5zfm6zTuKxs>

SMACK Talk 2 (Sword Manu-
als and Theory Behind Fight
Approach) (RUM):
<https://youtu.be/QZmLI4SMWLI>

Call for Content

We want to make sure there's
a central place to get informa-
tion and see posts that might
get buried, or resources that
might not be shared.

If you have info to share - an
upcoming virtual gathering,
activity ideas, or a great
website, please contact me:
clariciadlm@gmail.com.

Thank you and stay well!

5 Questions for Cleftlanders - Duchess Runa Æikibrandskona (mka Linda Bouck)

1.) How did you find your way into the SCA?

Her Excellency Serena got me interested. We both
had our horses boarded at a barn not far from my
house. She got me to go to meetings, where I saw this
really cute guy with long, sexy legs. I was hooked! It
was all uphill from there.

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

Geeze, that is a hard one - there is so much to choose
from. I guess Combat Archery on the marshal side
and Fiber Arts on the artsy side.

3.) What did you learn from being Royalty?

The main thing that being Royalty taught me was
to be comfortable in front of a crowd. As Royalty we
wanted everyone to enjoy themselves, that meant that
we had to have fun. So much of what you do as a Royal affects the populace, good
or bad. So I wanted to be as relaxed and open as I possibly could. This is not every-
one's idea of being on the throne, but it worked for me.

4.) What's your favorite thing to do at an SCA event?

I will have to say that my most favoritest thing was as Queen being able to recognize
people for their accomplishments and give out awards. Now that I am retired, I love to
talk to new people and show them that those of us with fancy hats are approachable
and willing to spend time talking to them.

5.) What's one thing about you that people may not know?

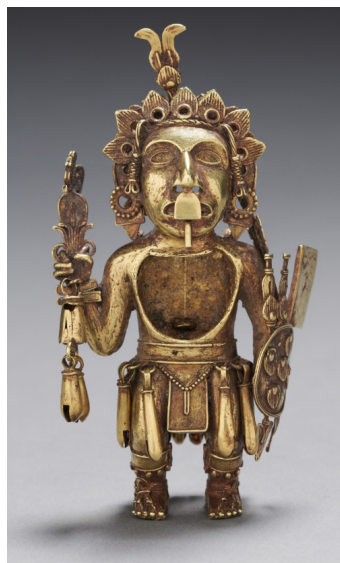
That my first language was actually Spanish, which I stopped speaking as a child. I
am now actively learning it again, and hoping that my brain will click at some point
and make it easier.



Random Period Object - Cleveland Museum of Art

Figure of a Warrior, Central Mexico, Aztec, 1345-1575

Alloy of gold, silver, and copper - <https://www.cleveland-art.org/art/1984.37#>



This finely detailed figure depicts an elite Aztec warrior. He holds a dart-thrower and a shield, and the fine nature of his jewelry and sandals reveal his high status. Note the craftsmanship and detail of the headdress, earrings, and other pieces. Go to the website to view the figure from other angles, including the back where glyphs are shown that read "2 Rabbit, 3 Water".

The Aztecs valued military accomplishments as they expanded their empire through the belief that they were chosen to uphold cosmic order.

A hollow cavity of the chest and back of the head is of unknown purpose, but may have allowed the piece to be hung as a pendant.

Archeology News: Anglo-Saxon Warlord Burial, a Norse god house uncovered, a historic Scottish bridge rediscovered

By THL Jolicica atte Northclyffe

New facts about the ancient, Medieval and Renaissance worlds are continually being discovered. Here is a selection of the latest developments from the world of medieval archeology:

Anglo-Saxon Burial: The discovery of a sixth-century Anglo-Saxon warlord in southern England by metal detector hobbyists is now being investigated by archaeologists. The skeleton of the man, dubbed the “Marlow Warlord” after the Berkshire town near where the remains were found, was buried with a sword in a decorated scabbard and other weapons. He would have lived only decades after the collapse of Roman rule in Britain. The find sheds light on the politics of the region, which overlooks the central Thames Valley.

Source: <https://www.livescience.com/anglo-saxon-warlord-discovered-metal-detectorists.html>

Norse God House: The remains of a 1,200-year-old temple to Odin, Thor, and other Old Norse gods have been discovered in Norway. The temple, a rare relic of the Viking religion, was built a few centuries before the rise of Christianity in that region, archaeologists said.

The large wooden building — about 45 feet long and 26 feet wide — probably dates from the late eighth century. The Norse began building these large “god houses,” as they’re called, in the sixth century and used them during solstices for worship and sacrifices. God houses were more complex than the simple outdoor sites previously used for worship.

Source: <https://www.livescience.com/ancient-viking-temple-to-thor-odin-unearthed.html>

Little Ice Age Explained: A new study looked at marine sediment cores from the ocean floor to find the trigger for the Little Ice Age that cooled Europe from the 14th to 19th centuries. The study, published in “Science Advances”, suggests that the Little Ice Age — actually a regional cooling in Europe — was triggered by an exceptionally large outflow of sea ice from the Arctic Ocean into the North Atlantic in the 1300s. The study found evidence in the geological record that supports climate models showing that increased sea ice caused the cool period.

Source: <https://www.medievalists.net/2020/10/little-ice-age/>

Kings Way Bridge Found: Remains of the Ancrum Old Bridge, which carried James V and Mary Queen of Scots over the River Teviot in Scotland, has been located after being hidden underwater for hundreds of years.

The bridge’s original oak timbers date to the mid-14th century, making the Ancrum Old Bridge the oldest scientifically dated bridge ever found in its original position across one of Scotland’s rivers. Built during the reigns of David II of Scotland and Edward III of England, the bridge formed part of the “Via Regia” – or The Kings Way – from Edinburgh to Jedburgh and the Borders. The strategically important bridge stood for more than 400 years.

Source: <https://www.scotsman.com/heritage-and-retro/heritage/lost-medieval-bridge-transported-kings-and-queens-re-emerges-3018150>

This Week in History

January 24 1536 - King Henry VIII receives a brain injury while jousting, which might have caused later erratic actions.
January 25 750 - Rebels defeat the Umayyad Caliphate in the Battle of Zab (now Iraq), to begin the Abbasid dynasty.
January 26 1565 - Defeat at the Battle of Talikota leads to the destruction of the last Hindu kingdom in India.
January 27 555 - Emperor Yuan of Liang is executed. He collected ancient texts, but burned 140k during a siege.
January 28 1591 - [Agnes Sampson](#), a Scottish midwife and healer, is garrotted and burnt at the stake as a witch.
January 29 1258 - The Mongols are defeated at the battle of Đông Bộ Đầu, forcing them out of Đại Việt (Vietnam).
January 30 1287 - Didius Julianus is born. He later purchased the throne and was Emperor of Rome for 9 weeks.

Cleftlands Officers' Contact Information

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- Quartermaster; Lady Sarra Bossard; quartermaster@cleftlands.org

Upcoming Cleftlands Events

- Tuesday, January 26 7:30pm EST Virtual Needleworkers' Gathering - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88261643621?pwd=UGx1TTdPcVdNNWtHZFhDZkxYR0d5Zz09>
- Thursday, January 28 8pm EST Virtual Armorers' Guild Meeting - <https://www.facebook.com/events/327411918397483/>
- Thursday, February 4 8pm EST Virtual Armorers' Guild Meeting - <https://www.facebook.com/events/327411918397483/>

Portrait photo of Duchess Runa credited to Lord Tarmach ben Yehuda al-Khazari,

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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