



A Cleftlands (Middle Kingdom) Newsletter - 1/9/2022

Cleftlands News

Cleftlands Meetings Canceled for January

After reviewing the current, local information on the latest Covid surge, the officers met to determine the safest way to move forward. With careful consideration to the input received and the suggestion of the Kingdom Seneschal, the decision was made to halt Baronial meetings through January.

The next planned Baronial meeting is currently February 9, but the officers will meet on January 19 to discuss plans for February, which will be announced as soon as possible.

Applications for the Next Cleftlands Baron/Baroness Are Open

From January 1 through January 31 2022, those wishing to submit their applications to be the next Baron/Baroness of the Cleftlands can do so by sending their application packet to the Cleftlands Seneschal (seneschal@cleftlands.org). This must be submitted digitally.

All information and applications must be submitted by 11:59 pm on January 31, and no changes will be accepted after that time.

The required information is:

- SCA name(s) and any titles (how each person would like to be listed in the poll).
- Legal name with contact information: mailing address, phone number, email address.
- Copy of a membership card for each person that is valid through May.
- A copy of a photo ID for each person.
- A photo of each candidate.
- A photo release form, if not already on file, as their imagery will be used for the poll and other communications.
- The letter of intent - any information the candidate(s) wishes to communicate to the populace and the Crown. This might include an "SCA resume", aka accomplishments done in the SCA, mundane qualifications, the reasons they are applying, or their vision for the Barony. This part is up to the applicant.
- Please submit documents in PDF or Word format, and images as a jpeg or png.

Each applicant must possess the following qualifications:

- Applications can be done by a single person or by any combination of 2 persons.
- Current SCA member.
- Allowed to participate at Cleftlands, Middle Kingdom, and all SCA events.
- Provides required documentation listed above.
- Age 18 or over.

The applications are reviewed by the Baronial seneschal just make sure all the required documentation is included and to help with any forms needed.

The finalized applications will be placed on the Cleftlands website and the applicants announced on February 2, when the poll will be open. The poll will close on February 23.

If you have any questions, please contact Their Excellencies (baron@cleftlands.org/baroness@cleftlands.org) or the Seneschal.

Cleftlands Seeks a New Rapier Marshal

After doing an excellent job of providing safe rapier activities since before the pandemic, Lady Ragna seeks to step down. In order to continue to have rapier activities in the Barony, we will need a new marshal. If you are able and willing, please contact her to discuss the position at rapiermarshal@cleftlands.org

What does a rapier marshal do? Lady Ragna says:

Safety is the primary concern of the Cleftlands Group Rapier Marshal. They are responsible for ensuring that all fighters taking the field do so in a safe manner and oversee all practices to maintain that level of safety. They are responsible for training and education, assisting new fighters themselves, or making sure they get appropriate connections to continue their training. They organize practices, maintaining records of fighters who attend, and report quarterly to the Kingdom on activities.

The official application process will be announced soon.

News of the Realms

SCA News -

- The main SCA offices have moved and thus have a new PO Box mailing address. See the full address: <https://www.sca.org/news/new-year-new-post-office-box/>
- The Society mourns the loss of Mrs. Betty Cooper, who founded Coopers Lake Campground with her husband, Mack. Coopers Lake is home to Pennsic, and many have fond memories of her friendship. Her obituary can be found here: <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/butlereagle/name/betty-cooper-obituary?id=31924519>
- Graf Ulrich von Brandenburg (K.T. "Shep" Sheppard) has been selected as the newest member of the SCA Board of Directors, for Seat F. <https://www.sca.org/news/people-on-the-move-director-elect-seat-f/>
- The Board has amended the COVIDSafe policy so that a current SCA membership card can be used as a form of ID for those attendees to SCA activities who are 18 or older and must show ID along with proof of Covid vaccination or negative test result. <https://www.sca.org/news/board-resolution-amendment-to-covidsafe-policy-proof-of-identification/>
- A further amendment to the COVIDSafe policy is to clarify that children who are ineligible to receive the Covid vaccine due to their age do not have to show proof of vaccination or a negative test result. <https://www.sca.org/news/amendment-to-covidsafe-policy-vaccine-children/>
- The Society has a new Minister of Arts & Sciences - congratulations to Magnifica Hildegard Bergerin, OL. <https://www.sca.org/news/people-on-the-move-new-society-minister-of-arts-sciences/>
- A new Society Chronicler has also been appointed. Mistress Cecilia Blythe, OP, will serve in the office for the next 3 years. <https://www.sca.org/news/people-on-the-move-new-society-chronicler-appointed/>

Kingdom News

- Their Royal Majesties will be holding a virtual Court on Saturday, January 15. Please see the Facebook event for details: <https://www.facebook.com/events/4660521674025510>
- Their Highnesses plan to choose three Champions from each category. They will announce those persons in the coming months.
- The new Standard Royal Round for thrown weapons has been accepted and is now live on the thrown weapons score website. <https://scores-sca.org/home/index.php?R=45>
- Cpt Dyderich Wolfhart will be the new DKEM Youth Combat.

Baronial News

- Many thanks to all who participated in the Yule revel on December 15! While we did not know at the time that it would be our last gathering for a while, all still made merry and bright. To see the results of the "Not Necessarily a Cookie Exchange" go here: <http://www.cleftlands.org/2021/5048/> Our gratitude to Baroness Angharad!
- Congratulations to Lady Ragna stórráða Úlfisdóttir - she is already the Midrealm's Rouge Scarpe Herald and was just announced as the next Quarterstaff for the SCA College of Arms. This relatively new position assists submitters with redrawing things they may not be able to register as submitted.

5 Questions for Cleftlanders - Lady Zofia der Kinder (mka Ahmie Yeung) (she/her/they/them)

1.) What first drew you to the SCA?

Friends :) I have known SCAdians since the late 1990s when I was an undergraduate at CWRU and casually attended a few events at their invitation, but didn't have time or energy to be involved. I also had the MISTAKEN impression that my inability to dress in authentic garb meant that I wouldn't be welcome with how glorious all the garb was on others - it was a little intimidating! I went dormant after finishing my degree and starting to have babies, then grad school with multiple disabilities in the mix... it didn't seem like I had time for any outside-the-house hobbies. As I recovered from earning my Master's (in Sociology, focused on socialization processes), a dear friend who had helped me with my academic access logistics became involved in Cleftlands and started repeatedly urging me to come with the kids - and offering to take the kids without me if I needed a break. I came to check out the current social context situation by attending Regular Event 2015 with just my firstborn (who was 11 at the time and really wanted in on the fun his auntie kept telling him about). I was treated with so much kindness and respect, and I was hooked!



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

"Village building" comprises the majority of my time, which isn't - as far as I know - an official SCA non-officer activity (but maybe it will be someday ;)). I cherish my role as a matron of the community who checks in on the psychosocial well-being of everyone I encounter, putting my momming skills into play for anyone of any age who seems to need someone to fill that role for them for a little bit so they feel genuinely wanted in the space of our community. As far as official activities go, thrown weapons is my absolute favorite thing to do in the SCA though I am absolutely horrible at it. I think I've hit a target maybe 3 times total in the 4 years I've been playing at that activity.

3.) You're currently the Regional Minister of Youth - what do you do in that role and what are some of your goals during your tenure?

Officially, the responsibility of the role is making sure quarterly reports are completed by the local level Ministers of Youth and address any concerns they're having while being a resource to help more people fill those roles. Currently, Cleftlands is the only group in North Oaken that has a designated Minister of Youth; all the other actively warranted Ministers of Youth are at-large or filling Kingdom-level roles. My primary goal for my first year of my tenure in this office is to get a Minister of Youth officer in every local group in North Oaken, so that newcomers who are checking out the website will see that is a position with a contact person. I have sent out emails to the Seneschals for each of the groups asking if they need any support from me to make that happen and I'll be reaching out to the Chatelaines after New Year to likewise provide some nudging. Additionally, I am making my activity supply bins that I bring to Youth Pointe (which get used by individuals, 1:1 mentoring, or small groups) available as a borrowable resource for any events in North Oaken that I can get them to regardless of my own attendance. I also consider facilitating and moderating issues that arise from youth trying to awkwardly socially integrate what is an overwhelmingly adult-centered context to be a core component of Minister of Youth work, and I endeavor to model that consistently in my engagements at all times.

4.) What is one thing in the SCA that you'd like to try but haven't yet?

Shoe making! As hard as it has been to keep all my children in relatively appropriate garb as they hit growth spurts (for those who don't already know me, I have five sons ages 5-17), shoes have been modern by necessity. I'm hoping to get involved in the newly forming Cleftlands Makers Guild, we have a large format 3D printer in our home and I think I might be able to make durable enough shoe soles out of flexible filament then build up from there with period-appropriate methods & materials. I've also been trying to find time to sit next to someone who is doing nal-binding as I've not been able to pick that skill up from the videos I've watched.

5.) If you could have dinner with 1 person from SCA period, who would it be & what would you talk about?

Marcus Aurelius's primary childhood caregiver. I'm an actively practicing Stoic and I would love the opportunity to discuss how to shape and guide a child to be the kind of person who writes with such gratitude as he did in what is usually printed as the beginning of the Meditations. Marcus's own son & successor did not turn out nearly as well so I wouldn't want to talk to the man himself about such things. So much of later period philosophy of good leadership was shaped by the Stoics that I'd want to go to the early foundations of that work so I could get some more ideas of how to foster similar excellence in the young humans I encounter.

New Year's Celebrations in Period and Around the World

By Lady Claricia de la Mere

Most people know that today's date that marks the end of a year has not been the same throughout history, and indeed still today may be marked on a day other than January 1. This article will touch on just a few New Year's historical tidbits, but there are many more traditions out there for research.

As early as 4,000 years ago, the ancient Babylonians marked the start of a new year at the first new moon following the vernal equinox. This would put it sometime in March or April. The corresponding festival was called Akitu. During this time there were 11 days of festivities, each with a different celebration. Not only was it a new year, but it also celebrated the victory of Marduk, the sky god, over Tiamat, the sea goddess. Perhaps most importantly to the lives of most people was that this was the time of renewal for the king. The king would be stripped of his royal regalia and then slapped and dragged by the ears. If he wept from the pain, it was a sign that the god Marduk was satisfied with his rule, and it could continue. Or, if it was time, a new king would be crowned.

Other cultures marked new years in many different ways. For Egyptians it came with the flooding of the Nile, heralded by the rising of the star Sirius. This usually happened in what is now mid-July. The Nile's flooding brought with it nutrients to ensure the farmlands would be fertile for another year, certainly a good reason to celebrate. At some points, the first month of the year was a "festival of drunkenness", in honor of the way the god Ra tricked the goddess Sekhmet into drinking herself into a stupor rather than killing all of humanity.

Nowruz, also called the Persian New Year, is a 13-day spring festival held around the vernal equinox in March. It is believed that this celebration dates back to the 6th century BCE, although records only appear in the 2nd century CE. Ancient observances focused on lavish celebrations of the spring rebirth, with banquets and gifts. In the 10th century there was a tradition of having a commoner who got to be king for the duration of the festival. This holiday is still celebrated today with some of the original trappings, such as bonfires and colored eggs.

Chinese New Year is perhaps more well known. It is still observed at the second new moon after the winter solstice. It is based on a lunar calendar, and is believed to have been practiced for over 3,000 years. Like the Egyptians, the new year was marked as a time of new beginnings for crops - only in this case it was the time of spring planting. Celebrations last for 15 days and center on the home and family. Decorations of red, with bright lights and loud noises, originated as a way to scare off the beast "Nian". Since the invention of gunpowder in the 10th century, fireworks have been part of the celebrations. People also clean their houses or pay off debt to get rid of bad luck. Some will have family feasts, or decorate their doors with paper scrolls.

Of course, our current calendar originated with the Romans. In 46 BCE, Julius Caesar introduced the Julian calendar and declared January 1 as the first day of the year. This was partly to honor the god Janus, the namesake of January, who was a god of beginnings. Romans would offer sacrifices to the god, but also exchanged gifts of figs and honey to start out the year on a positive note.

During the Middle Ages, New Year's Day moved around in places under Christian leaders as they sought to attach more religious significance to the holiday. Anglo-Saxons celebrated the new year on Christmas (December 25), and William the Conqueror declared it to be January 1, to coincide with his coronation. That was not to last, as it moved to other days, most commonly the Feast of the Annunciation on March 25. Pope Gregory would move it to January 1 in 1582 permanently - for some.

To celebrate, medieval peoples in France held a Feast of Fools, with a mock ecclesiastical court and pope, and turned many norms on their head for the day. In England, gifts were exchanged, and in Ireland people banged on their home to chase out evil spirits before the new year began. In Poland, December 31 is known as Sylvester after St. Sylvester, who imprisoned and slew the dragon Leviathan. Boys dressed as devils and play pranks, and the following day bread was baked with trinkets inside that would foretell fortune in the coming year.

In Russia, New Year's wasn't moved to January 1 until 1699. Many traditions common to American Christmas can be seen at Russian New Year's celebrations, like a New Year's Tree, with Grandfather Frost passing out presents.

<https://www.history.com/topics/holidays/new-years>

<https://www.history.com/news/5-ancient-new-years-celebrations>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Year

<https://www.medievalists.net/2015/12/celebrating-the-new-year-medieval-style/>

Upcoming Midrealm Events

**January 15 - Royal Court;
Online; 3pm.**

[https://www.facebook.com/
events/4660521674025510](https://www.facebook.com/events/4660521674025510)

January 28-30 - Bardic Skirmishes; Online, via Zoom.

Learn more:

[https://sites.google.com/view/
bardic-skirmish](https://sites.google.com/view/bardic-skirmish)

**February 5 - Online Class:
What Is the Board of Directors? Learn more:**

<https://fb.me/e/2P0OWcx3H>

**February 12 - Winter RUM;
Fairborn, OH. Learn more:**

[https://wingedhills.midrealm.org/
events/](https://wingedhills.midrealm.org/events/)

**February 26 - Courting on
the River - Canceled**

**July 29-August 14 - Penn-
sic War; Cooper's Lake
Campground, PA. Registration
is now open:**

[https://cooperslake.com/prereg/
account/index.php](https://cooperslake.com/prereg/account/index.php)

Call for Content

We want to make sure there's a central place to get information 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!

Random Period Object - Cleveland Museum of Art



The New-born Buddha; China, 400s

Gilt bronze inlaid with turquoise and blue glass

~7.5" x 1.25" - [https://www.clevelandart.org/
art/1955.46](https://www.clevelandart.org/art/1955.46)

Depicting Buddha this way is rare. He is shown being bathed by the nine Nagas.

Nagas are often half-snake, half-human mythological creatures. Legends tell that nagas washed Gautama Buddha when he was born, then protected him while he lived, and guarded his relics after his death.

Upcoming Cleftlands Events

- Tuesday, Jan 11; 7:30pm - **Needleworkers' Guild Virtual Meeting** - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88261643621?pwd=UGx1TTdPcVdNNWtHZFhDZkxY-R0d5Zz09>
- Wednesday, Jan 12; 8:00pm - **Cleftlands Virtual Noblesse Largess Gift Exchange** - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89827491345?pwd=UXJONkI4eEJIWI-R3TTZrQ3pKZFpWZz09>
- Tuesday, Jan 18 7:00pm - **Virtual Bardic Open Mic** - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89768898132?pwd=bnQ3Nm5GQit1VVZKTDhFMnhEck5nUT09>
- Wednesday, Jan 19; 7:30pm - **Virtual A&S Show 'n' Tell** - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89827491345?pwd=UXJONkI4eEJIWIR3TTZrQ3pKZFpWZz09>
- Wednesday, Jan 19; 8:00pm - **Virtual Officers' Meeting**
- Tuesday, Jan 25, 7:30pm - **Needleworkers' Guild Virtual Meeting** - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88261643621?pwd=UGx1TTdPcVdNNWtHZFhDZkxY-R0d5Zz09>
- Wednesday, Jan 26; 7:00 pm - **Online Class: Bidding the Bedes** - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89156497290?pwd=STNjeE5NVTRFQnBTNIjRG-RHYzZndz09>
- Wednesday, Feb 2; 7:00pm - **Online Class: Virtual Intro to Heraldry** - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89156497290?pwd=STNjeE5NVTRFQnBTNIjRG-RHYzZndz09>
- Thursday, Feb 3; 7:00-10:00pm - **Armors' Guild Meeting - TBD**
- Wednesday, Feb 9; 6:30-10pm - **In-Person Cleftlands Meeting** St John of the Cross School, 140 Richmond Rd, Cleveland OH 44143.

Cleftlands Officers' Contact Information

- Baron: Baron Crispin de la Rouchefoucald; baron@cleftlands.org
- Baroness: Baroness Gianna Vettori; baroness@cleftlands.org
- Seneschal: Lady Claricia de la Mere; seneschal@cleftlands.org
- Exchequer: Lord Robert atte Northclyfe; exchequer@cleftlands.org
- Chatelaine: Lady Jaqueline la Deiciere; chatelaine@cleftlands.org
- Web Minister: Lady Brangwayn Snowden; webminister@cleftlands.org
- Social Media Coordinator: Lady Æthelwynn Skerra Dimma, social@cleftlands.org
- Herald: Sergeant Njall Orkneyjarson; herald@cleftlands.org
- Minister of Arts & Sciences: Baroness Angharad ferch Tangwystl; moas@cleftlands.org
- Knight's Marshal: Baroness Constanza de Mendoza; knightsmarshal@cleftlands.org
- Rapier Marshal: Lady Ragna Storrada Ulfsdottir; rapiermarshal@cleftlands.org
- Archery Marshal: Lord Cadfan of the Autumn Wood; archery@cleftlands.org
- Youth Marshal: Sergeant Bastian Eychener; youthmarshal@cleftlands.org
- Chronicler: The Honorable Lady Jolicia atte Northclyfe; chronicler@cleftlands.org
- Minister of Youth: Lord Rojhon the Wanderer; youthminister@cleftlands.org
- Demonstration Coordinator: Lord Carl of Cleftlands; demo@cleftlands.org
- Gold Key: Lady Fritha Eikbrandrsdottir; goldkey@cleftlands.org
- Iron Key: Lord Tryggr Gillason; ironkey@cleftlands.org
- Quartermaster: Lady Sarra Bossard; quartermaster@cleftlands.org

This Week in History

January 9 1127 - China's Northern Song dynasty ends when the invading Jin dynasty sacks Bianjing (Kaifeng).
January 10 1430 - The Order of the Golden Fleece established - the most exclusive order of chivalry in the world.
January 11 532 - Nika riots in Constantinople between supporters of different chariot teams become violent.
January 12 475 - Byzantine Emperor Zeno flees Constantinople, and his general, Basiliscus, controls the empire.
January 13 703 - Death of [Empress Jitō](#), one of only 7 reigning empresses of Japan. She succeeded her uncle.
January 14 1526 - Treaty of Madrid signed by Hapsburg emperor Charles V and his prisoner Francis I of France.
January 15 1541 - 15 years later, King Francis I goes on to give a commission to settle "New France" (Canada).

Photo of Lady Zofia der Kinder credited to Lord Yang Fu-Da.

The New-born Buddha 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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