



## *A Cleftlands (Middle Kingdom) Newsletter - 3/21/2021*

### News of the Realm

#### SCA News -

- The University of Atlantia will be hosting a virtual Knowne World Sciences Symposium on June 12, 2021. Visit for details: [University.Atlantia.SCA.org](http://University.Atlantia.SCA.org)
- The Kingdom of the West is hosting a virtual Known World Colegio de Iberia the first weekend in June: <https://scaiberia.com/known-world-colegio-de-iberia-2021/>
- Corporate announces the retirements of Renee Signorotti and Theresa Anderson: <https://www.sca.org/news/people-on-the-move-corporate-office-upcoming-retirements/>
- On March 2nd, the Board approved changes to the Introduction of the Corpora: <https://www.sca.org/news/corpora-revised-introduction/>

#### Kingdom News

- Watch the Royal court of Their Majesties from March 20: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xU50C\\_D4bQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6xU50C_D4bQ)
- Not sure you'll go to War this year? Have you always wanted to contribute to victory for your Kingdom? Represent the Midrealm at the **Bardic War!** Three alliances have been made, with 16 Kingdoms participating so far. Anyone can submit an entry that will compete for war points in all fields. Despite the name, it's not just for bards. War points are available for all types of performers as well as fighters, archers, crafters, volunteers, and more - read all about it at [bardicwar.org](http://bardicwar.org)
- This is the final week for RUM! See classes on the next page.
- A survey for the rapier community on how to rebuild better has been posted: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfHINOey6Peu\\_VZ5K5jyj0bTFDQpJ6vE-5LpcYKNpHn7dRcJg/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfHINOey6Peu_VZ5K5jyj0bTFDQpJ6vE-5LpcYKNpHn7dRcJg/viewform)

#### Baronial News

- Don't forget about the March A&S Challenge: Lencten, from Baroness Angharad. What are you doing to prepare for returning to the SCA? Post to Facebook, or email [moas@cleftlands.org](mailto:moas@cleftlands.org)

## Wonderful Ways the Spring Equinox was Celebrated in History

*By Lady Claricia de la Mere*

Spring is finally here for the northern hemisphere, and change is in the air. Our historical fore-bearers also felt the land and living creatures quicken as the days warmed. They celebrated it in very different ways, from days of blood to egg swallowing. Learn how the vernal equinox was celebrated around the world.

**Rome** - Of course Rome would make the list. Between March 21 and 25, Rome celebrated the Sanguinaria. This means "Day of Blood", and several different religious orders had appropriately bloody practices. Priests of Cybele, the "Great Mother", would observe days of mourning and abstinence. Then, on the Day of Blood, they flogged themselves and sprinkled the resulting blood across their altars. Also on this day, some priests of Attis, a god of vegetation, would castrate themselves. Finally, priests of Bellona (a Roman goddess of war), would cut themselves and drink the blood or give it as an offering.

After such an intense time, the next day began *Hilaria* and *Requietio* - a day of feasting, followed by a day of rest, and finished with a day of revelry and ritual bathing. The Romans most definitely held memorable events.

*Continued on page 2.*

# Spring Equinox - continued

**Persia** - Nowruz, still celebrated today, is the beginning of the Persian New Year. It begins the month of Farvardin in the Iranian solar calendar.

Mythology says that King Jamshid saved mankind from a world-ending winter by building a throne so bright with jewels that when he was raised to the sky it shone like the sun and chased cold away. Early mentions of a celebration at this time begin in the Achaemenid Empire (550-330 BCE). Records of the celebration taken during the Sasanian Empire (224-651 CE) say that Nowruz was the most important day of the year. The royalty would receive tributes and display their opulence as a symbol of their power. Prisoners were pardoned, cash gifts were made, and the royalty had public audiences. Many of these traditions continued into modern times.

**China** - The Shang (or Yin) Dynasty celebrates their founding on the spring equinox. Legends say that Jiandi, wife of Emperor Ku, swallowed an egg dropped by a swallow. That egg grew into a miraculous child, Xie, who founded the line. They are believed to have reigned from 1600 to 1046 BCE.

Egg standing games have been popular in China for 4,000 years - someone who can make an egg stand will have good luck. In the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), round sun cakes were given as an offering to the God of Sun.

**Judaism** - Tekufat Nisan (spring equinox) is one of four tekufot, the solstices and equinoxes. An ancient superstition said that any stored water should be thrown away in the first hour of the tekufah, as it would be poisoned. The origin of the belief is not known, but there are said to be different causes: angels who protect water are not watching at this time so it becomes corrupted, Cancer fighting with Libra drops blood into the water, or that this was the point that the waters in Egypt turn to blood.

**Catholicism** - March 25 is the Feast of the Annunciation, commemorating both the conception of Jesus Christ with the visit of the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary, and the death of Jesus. This was celebrated as early as the 4th or 5th centuries. It was a day of rest and attending mass. There were processions and passion plays, and in Rome a bright procession featuring a rich carriage drawn by 6 black horses went to Santa Maria della Minerva. After mass there, the pope distributed gold to 300 poor girls to help them find an appropriate marriage.

The swallows also return around the same time, which may be why they were given a kind of holy aura by people in Europe at the time.

Sources:

<https://www.bustle.com/p/the-spring-equinoxes-extremely-weird-history-45577>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dies\\_sanguinis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dies_sanguinis)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nowruz#Ancient\\_roots](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nowruz#Ancient_roots)

<http://english.visitbeijing.com.cn/a1/a-XBPATCD6DD7643A1AA7029>

<https://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/articles/14292-tekufah>

<https://catholicsaints.info/handbook-of-christian-feasts-and-customs-annunciation/>

## Virtual Classes for March 21 on :

- Sunday March 21 at 7pm EDT - Renaissance Perfumes - A Practical Approach with Dugu Jinan: <https://www.facebook.com/events/513458419624079>
- Monday March 22 at 7pm EDT - How to Create a Class from What You Know with Mistress Lucia Elena Braganza: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1097081117372265>
- Tuesday March 23 at 7pm EDT - Trans History with Lord Rojhon the Wanderer: <https://www.facebook.com/events/177424647168287>
- Wednesday March 24 at 7pm EDT - Introduction to Midrealm Page School with Mistress Elizabeth Alle: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1358179921216202>

**Armored:** Duke Eik's Videos:  
Sword & Shield Kata #28:

<https://youtu.be/W3VNqjxfWiw>

Sword & Shield Kata #29:

<https://youtu.be/Z2-WCuUdjg4>

D Range Step Attack:

<https://youtu.be/1xN3qbiahNI>

**The Known World SCA Virtual Fighter Practice Page:**

Video Analysis of Submitted fights with Sir Helga:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/186919603197692/>

Identifying & Overcoming the Social Challenges of Fighting:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/virtualfighterpractice>

Discussion with Leaky Pipeline (Representation of Women in Rapier) Authors:

<https://youtu.be/4ZcUGjMIRoA>

Coach's Corner Conversation with Duke Eikbrandr:

<https://www.facebook.com/vesper.ofatlantia/videos/272029434382081>

## 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](mailto:clariciadlm@gmail.com).

Thank you and stay well!

## 5 Questions for Cleftlanders - Baroness Madeleine Bouvier (mka Ellen Robinosn) (she/her)

### 1.) How did you get involved in the SCA?

I learned about the SCA when I lived in California, but was too young and didn't have a car of my own to get to meetings, so I put it on my "things to look into later" list. During college I got involved in local theater. After the summer season ended, a friend asked if I wanted to go to something called Bay Crafters. I found the SCA there again and, as they say, the rest was history.

### 2.) What are your 2 favorite things to do in the SCA?

Only two things? There have been many favorites over the years. I guess sewing/fiber arts and cooking are my two favorites at the moment. But I'm always looking for something new, like glass bead-making and jewelry (both very addictive). I think it's good, and important, to keep trying something different. You never know when you'll find a new favorite thing!

### 3.) What inspired your recent garb projects, and what are your goals?

Well, when the pandemic hit and Pennsic got canceled for 2020, I figured it might be a good time to get some sewing projects done for my family. With my fabric stash getting a complete reorganization, it was easier to see what I had so I'd know what I could do. Boy, did that open a Pandora's box of projects! So, I've just been working on items one at a time, as one does, to get our wardrobes refreshed and expanded. I'm down to the last big one - the rework of an Italian renaissance gown that I got secondhand.

It wasn't my end goal, but when I was talking to a non-SCA friend about the work I had been doing, she asked if I'd put together a talk to give to an educational group that she belongs to. Now I have a PowerPoint presentation ready to go for the end of April. Just goes to show that you never know where your interests will lead you.

### 4.) How did you pick your SCA name?

That is a twofold story. When I lived in Williamsburg, VA, we had a French neighbor who called me "Alain" (phonetic spelling), and I liked it better than Ellen. So I thought I'd use it when I joined the SCA, but there were so many people in the Cleftlands whose names started with an "a" or "a" sound that I decided to go with Madeleine. The Bouvier comes from former First Lady Jacky Kennedy's maiden name. I have always admired her very much.

### 5.) What are your favorite foods?

If you'd ever seen my collection of cook books from around the world you wouldn't ask that. I like a lot of different things. Food should be of good quality (why waste the calories on overly processed stuff), satisfying to the body, and interesting to the senses. I'll try just about anything once. (Except bugs...too crunchy. Rattlesnake is very good, though.) I do have a particular soft spot for Middle Eastern/Mediterranean food, Asian food, and the comfort food I grew up with (sometimes changed to be more healthy).



# Medieval Archeology News

By THL Jolicica atte Northclyffe

A long-lost Asian medieval empire, 16th-century gardens, and bone fractures that tell about medieval life are all part of this month's medieval archaeology news.

**Medieval Hoard in Cambridge** - An early medieval graveyard found beneath buildings at Cambridge University is being hailed as one of the most exciting recent finds of Anglo-Saxon archaeology. King's College discovered the cemetery, which holds more than 60 graves, after demolishing a group of 1930s buildings that provided housing for graduates and staff. The buildings were razed to make room for more modern halls.

The graves include human remains that were well preserved thanks to the alkaline soil. Also found were about 200 items, including swords, pottery, bronze brooches, bead necklaces, short blades, and glass flasks. Most date from the early Anglo-Saxon period of 400 to 650 CE.

Source: <https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/world/find-of-the-century-medieval-hoard-of-treasures-unearthed-in-cambridge/ar-BB1deBJ8>

**Long-Lost Medieval Empire** - Chinese archaeologists have discovered one of the largest medieval Buddhist monasteries ever found anywhere in the world. The monastery is thought to be part of a vanished medieval kingdom, the Nanzhao Empire, whose armies conquered huge regions of southeast Asia.

Chinese archaeologists, excavating in the ruins of the empire's capital in Southwest China, discovered a large complex consisting of at least 14 buildings. It was almost certainly constructed by the ruling Nanzhao Empire dynasty, researchers said. Items found suggest that some of the empire's rulers were buried at the monastery.

Source: <https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/world/a-vanished-empire-major-new-discovery-exposes-long-lost-medieval-kingdom/ar-BB1dbiGn>

**16th-Century Gardens Discovered** - The clearing of land for a high-speed train line in Britain uncovered the outlines of large ornamental gardens belonging to a 16th-century manor house. The discovery, near of Birmingham, has compared to Hampton Court. It is believed Sir Robert Digby, who owned the house in its heyday, built the 1,000-foot-long gardens to show off his wealth and status.

Source: <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/world/archaeologists-uncover-remains-of-16th-century-manor-house-gardens/ar-BB1d73JD>

**Social Status Revealed in Bones** - Human remains from Cambridge, England, reveal social inequities from the 20th to the 14th centuries. Researchers studied the skeletons of 314 people who lived during that time, cataloging every bone fracture to look for correlations between the person's social status and the risk of injury.

The Cambridge study looked at three burial sites: a parish graveyard for the working poor; a charitable hospital that housed the sick and needy; and an Augustinian friary that held the remains of wealthy donors and clergy. The remains of workers buried in the parish graveyard showed the most trauma, likely a result of injuries from working with heavy ploughs pulled by horses or oxen, and transporting stone blocks and wooden beams, the study said.

Source: <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/technology/medieval-skeletons-show-social-inequality-record-ed-on-the-bones/ar-BB1d7vc7>

## This Week in History

March 21 630 - Marriage of King Louis VII of France and Queen [Eleanor of Aquitaine](#) is annulled.

March 22 871 - Aethelred of Wessex is defeated by a Danish army. His brother would become Alfred the Great.

March 23 1400 - After 175 years of rule, the Trần dynasty of Vietnam is deposed by Hồ Quý Ly.

March 24 1605 - Queen Elizabeth I of England dies and James VI of Scotland inherits the English throne.

March 25 1576 - Jerome savage starts the Newington Butts Theater, possibly the earliest Elizabethan theater.

March 26 1169 - [Saladin](#) becomes the emir of Egypt. He is the first sultan of Egypt and Syria.

March 27 1378 - Pope Gregory XI dies, causing the Western Schism involving 2 French anti-popes.

## Cleftlands Officers' Contact Information

- Baron: Baron Crispin de la Rouchefoucauld; 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 Shahzada Ishfahani; 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

## Upcoming Cleftlands Events

- Tuesday, March 23 7:30pm EST Virtual Needleworkers' Gathering - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88261643621?pwd=UGx1TTdPcVdNNWtHZFhDZkxYR0d5Zz09>
- Thursday, March 25 8pm EST Virtual Armorers' Guild Meeting - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84704344487?pwd=UGJrZUxqNW5JQ05jeHBtYWdLQUI4QT09>
- Thursday, April 1 8pm EST Virtual Armorers' Guild Meeting -<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84704344487?pwd=UGJrZUxqNW5JQ05jeHBtYWdLQUI4QT09>

*Portrait photo of Baroness Madeleine Bouvier 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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