



## *A Cleftlands (Middle Kingdom) Newsletter - 11/22/2020*

### **News of the Realm**

**Happy Thanksgiving! Everyone stay safe and enjoy some good food.**

#### **SCA News -**

- The next Topical Town Hall will be on the topic of "finance". You can submit your questions here: <https://www.sca.org/topical-town-hall-request-form/>
- The SCA received its quarterly donation from the AmazonSmile program. Thanks to all who make this their Smile donation option! Find out more here: <https://www.sca.org/news/amazon-smile-update-november-2020/>

#### **Kingdom News**

- Their Majesties Court from Saturday, November 21 is available here: <https://youtu.be/kslvhZ3P9v0>
- Congratulations to THL Niccoló Bartolazzi who achieved the Academician status for teaching RUM classes, and to Lady Shahzada Isfahani who achieved the Graduate level as a RUM student.
- A new edition of the Armored Combat Handbook has been approved. Find it here: <https://library.mid-realm.org/marshal/heavy-combat/>
- Their Majesties issued a reminder about the Pilgrimage of Haseki Hürrem Sultan in honor of Her Majesty. To find out more or participate, seek out THL Rodrick Hart. (On Facebook as Daniel Hart).

#### **Baronial News**

- Their Excellencies will be hosting a Baronial court for Yule. Submit award recommendations! We may not be meeting in person, but that doesn't mean that past deeds or current offline efforts can't be rewarded. Submit your recommendation here: <http://www.cleftlands.org/award-recommendation/>
- Have you started shopping for the holidays? Don't forget that the Cleftlands shop is still open for stocking stuffers and other Cleftland-y gifts: <https://cleftlands.myshopify.com>

### **Easy-to-Make, Easy-to-Mail Crafty Gifts for Anyone**

It's that time of year where we're usually thinking about what to give our people to show them we appreciate their presence in our lives. This year is different - we won't be seeing as many people, and many are cutting back on what they spend. Here are some ideas of things you can make that people on your list will love. What's more, most of them are light enough that they won't cost a fortune to mail, so you can send them to celebrate at a distance.

#### **From Lady Dulcia Wylde:**

- Orange, lime or lemon sugared peels, super easy to make and now considered quaint. Pack them up nicely in a tin or little holiday baggy.
- Another fun candy idea, make hard candies. They are fun because you can mix flavors or colors. Again package them into little tins or baggies. Martha Stewart has some recipes: <https://www.marthastewart.com/275603/easy-candy-recipes>
- Leather ornaments, if you have scrape suede or leather use a cookie cutter and outline a holiday shape, cut it out, use twine for the hanging bit. Also scrape leather is great for bookmarks, bracelets or hair ties. Try Weaver Leather Supply for how-to videos: <https://www.weaverleathersupply.com/learn/how-to-videos>
- Use cheap cloth from Joann's to make holiday themed masks, brighten them up with little ornaments or bells.
- Make small wreaths out of fallen branches in your yard, decorate with acorns or other debris

*Continued on page 2.*

## Easy Gifts Using SCA Skills - continued

- Use extra beads as decorations on your holiday table. String them together and either lay them out or wrap around candles or hurricane glass. Beaded bracelets or necklaces are also nice touches or lovely napkin rings if you use elastic.
- Get some plain white cotton napkins and dye them fun colors, you can then use this as an alternative to wrapping paper. [Try Dharma Trading for how-to instructions: <https://www.dharmatrading.com/home/information-you-can-use-from-dharma-trading-co.html>]
- If you have an inkle loom, weave a new band for a Christmas tree or wreath.

### From Lady Jaquelinne la Deiciere:

- Felting - make cute animals, purses, pouches, or ornaments. [Learn how to felt here: [http://wiki.cleftlands.org/images/a/a9/Internebbles\\_Apr12\\_2020.pdf](http://wiki.cleftlands.org/images/a/a9/Internebbles_Apr12_2020.pdf)]
- For a fun craft gift for kids, pipe cleaner and bead ornaments. [<https://blog.vickybarone.com/2014/12/10/diy-bead-pipe-cleaner-christmas-ornaments/>]

### From Lady Jolicia atte Northclyfe

- Knitting projects - knitting is period! [Here are some unique ideas that they claim are fast to make: <https://www.diyncrafts.com/29736/gifts/25-gorgeous-knitted-christmas-gifts-can-make-jiffy>]
- Chain link jewelry, ornaments, etc.
- Wire rings, earrings, or necklaces. [Or shop VERY local at Mistress Elizabeth's Etsy store: <https://www.etsy.com/shop/uglyduckling>]
- Japanese stab binding - make small notebooks as gifts. Blank, or put in some of their favorite poems, stories, or other favorite things.
- Pickles and preserves - make them in batches and give in a jar with a personalized tag that has ingredients and a gift message. This one may not be practical to ship!

### From Lady Claricia de la Mere

- Food is always good! Period (or period-inspired) options like candied nuts and seeds, but also cookies and fudge. Put them in tins or plastic tubs to make them easy to ship. Set up your own mail-in cookie exchange!
- Customized seasoning blends. You can buy spices in bulk and then make up your own sweet and savory mixes to send with a card to loved ones.
- Cross stitch ornaments, fun sayings, or a goodbye to 2020 that everyone can appreciate.
- Sewing from scraps - use up your scraps by making a Chapstick or antibacterial gel holder, a "mug rug" (like a place mat for mugs to sop up any spills and is easy to wash), goblet/wine glass covers, bookmarks, drawer sachets, and more.

Also, help out your SCA merchants who are hurting this year. You can find all sorts of them on Facebook in the SCA Merchant Relief group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2629774650640671/>

Got more ideas? Share them with everyone - we could all use a little inspiration!

## Random Period Object - Cleveland Museum of Art



Ancestral Commemorative Head (uhunmwun-elao), Nigeria, Edo peoples, mid-1500s or early 1600s.

Brass, cast by Igun Eronmwon (Royal Brasscasters)

An Oba, or king, would commission a head like this to be placed on a shrine to their predecessor. This figure is depicted wearing layered necklaces of coral beads. Similar coral necklaces are still worn today. Once, this head would have supported a tusk. The brass was immune to corrosion, and represented permanence. This piece was taken in 1897 following the Siege of Benin. Contact the Cleveland Museum of Art to ask about its provenance:

<https://www.clevelandart.org/art/1938.6>

## For the Combat & Ranged Arts

**Armored:** Duke Eik's Videos: Discussion on Single Timing vs Double Timing

<https://youtu.be/GzJIZCk1nDo>

Longsword Triangle of Defense:

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

Royal University of the Mid: Italian Poleaxe Fighting:

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

RUM: History of Late Period Shields and How to Use Them:

<https://youtu.be/35Rmi3wPxv4>

**Fencers:** RUM: Feeding the Fencer - Sport Nutrition:

<https://youtu.be/eBYi10vH-4c>

RUM: Two Duels [A Comparison of Two Italian Dueling Philosophies]:

<https://youtu.be/eBYi10vH-4c>

**Equestrian:** RUM: Mamluk Lance from Horseback:

<https://youtu.be/E8tJXrbUljk>

## 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 - Lady Gunnora de la Grève (mka Ashley Ribando) (she/her/hers)

### 1.) Who got you started in the SCA and how did they do it?

Actually, I found the SCA in a Google search for "sword fighting"! I came to my first meeting and met many people who were essential to me staying interested and involved. From Patrick who gave me the "scoop" as I observed my first fighter practice to His Grace Laurelen Darksbane & Sir Kristzian von Atzinger who made sure I had everything I needed to pursue my interests and fully enjoy the SCA. I also want to mention Baron Calum MacDhaibhidh who made me feel super welcome going to my first Armors Guild Meeting & Baron Lorimer MacAltin who never let me stand awkwardly at a meeting or event with no one to chat with!



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

Right now I am completely immersed in costuming and embroidery!

### 3.) What is something in the SCA that you'd like to try?

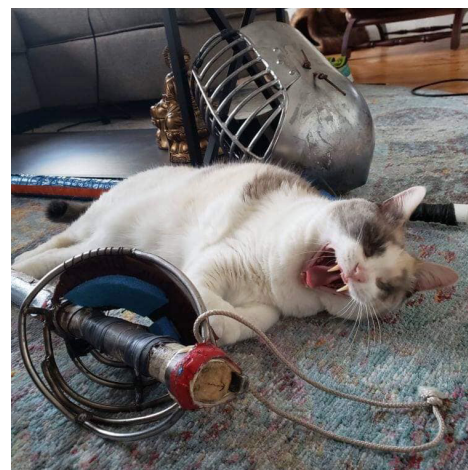
I am in awe of the beautiful illuminations from talented artists. I would love to give it a try!

### 4.) Do you have a persona? If so, what is it? If not, is there a particular time and place that interests you?

Yes, I am Norman French living in 13th century France. Specifically in the Vendée region on the island of Noirmoutier. I live with relatives in Château de Noirmoutier. I originally came to view the relics of St. Philbert, who founded a monastery here around 674. However, due to my "unladylike" interest in martial arts, it was determined I should remain here indefinitely. I don't mind, I love it! More info on the location [here](#).

### 5.) Tell us about your pets!

I have four house beasts (cats).



Lady Gunnora's cat, Tater.

## Virtual Classes for November 22 through December 6:

- Sunday November 22 7pm EST - [Sor Ustad Q & A](https://zoom.us/j/99182195136?pwd=alp4MXV0dnZTZUR3VkJIR2J6dIZGQT09): <https://zoom.us/j/99182195136?pwd=alp4MXV0dnZTZUR3VkJIR2J6dIZGQT09>
- Sunday December 6 8pm EST - Nalbinding 101B with Livia von Baden: <https://zoom.us/j/92947048681?pwd=bzdFZEhUSkr5emJ2MDNFZ2dwW-WdEZz09>



# “By Force Alone” is Imaginative Retelling of King Arthur’s Tale

By *THL Jolicica atte Northclyffe*

Imagine the King Arthur legend without chivalry or holy quests, and all of its main characters turned into less than chivalrous people.

Science fiction and fantasy author Lavie Tidhar’s “By Force Alone” (Tor, \$27.99) makes the Arthurian legend a historical fiction and fantasy mashup with a dash of violence and a spoonful of magic. In this retelling, Arthur is a gang leader in Londinium, Guinevere is the commander of a mercenary army, and Lancelot is an assassin trained in Kung-Fu. The Holy Grail is an alien object, and a rotted, severed head has the power of prophecy.

Here are snippets from some reviews of “By Force Alone”:

Tor.com: “Lavie Tidhar’s ‘By Force Alone’ gives us an Arthur for the Brexit era: A tyrant in lieu of a king, brute violence in lieu of gallant feats, undisguised venality in lieu of chivalric ideals. This is the Matter of Britain become the Matter with Britain.”

Washington Post: “The prose style is half of what makes the book so powerful. Tidhar is both clean and poetic, elegantly sparse but deeply evocative. Every phrase is load-bearing. The profanity serves its purpose. He switches between point-of-view characters and authorial voice seamlessly, using short almost-choppy sentences to give a sense of inevitable forward movement, events lensing into one another.”

Locus: “If all this sounds like a wildly cavalier approach to the matter of Britain, with subtle and not-so-subtle allusions to contemporary politics and dialogue more suited to Samuel Jackson than to Tennyson, Tidhar makes it clear in an informed afterword that this has pretty much always been the case with Arthurian literature, from Geoffrey of Monmouth’s fabulations through the additions of Norman, French, and German writers, all the way down to Malory and eventually the Victorians.”

Tidhar was raised on a kibbutz in Israel, and has lived in South Africa, the United Kingdom, Laos, and the small island nation of Vanuatu. He is known for his Bookman Histories series of novels (“The Bookman,” “Camera Obscura” and “The Great Game”) that pair literary and historical characters with steampunk.

Tidhar also won acclaim for “A Man Lies Dreaming,” an alternate history detective novel with Hitler as a private detective, and “Osama,” about the search for the creator of pulp thriller hero Osama bin Laden. “Osama” won the 2012 World Fantasy Award for Best Novel.

Interested in other tales of King Arthur’s Camelot? Here are a few titles you can buy or request from your local library:

- Bernard Cornwell: The Warlord Chronicles (“Winter King,” “Enemy of God” and “Excalibur”).
- Helen Hollick: Pendragon’s Banner trilogy (“The Kingmaking,” “Pendragon’s Banner” and “Shadow of the King”).
- Kazuo Ishiguro: “The Buried Giant” follows events after Arthur’s death.
- Nancy Springer: “I am Mordred” and “I am Morgan le Fay” are young adult novels.
- Tim Powers: “The Drawing of the Dark” is about an immortal Arthur at the Siege of Vienna in 1529.

## This Week in History

November 22 1307 - Pope Clement V instructs the monarchs of Europe to arrest all Templars and seize their assets.

November 23 1499 - [Perkin Warbeck](#), who claimed the English throne as the lost son of King Edward IV, is hanged.

November 24 1227 - Gąsawa massacre: An assembly of Polish dukes is attacked by assassins while bathing.

November 25 1491 - The Treaty of Granada is signed to end the siege of Granada, last Moorish stronghold in Spain.

November 26 1476 - Vlad the Impaler defeats Basarab Laiota to become ruler of Wallachia for the third time.

November 27 602 - Emperor Maurice is usurped by one of his generals, who beheads the Emperor and his 6 sons.

November 28 1582 - William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway get their marriage license in Stratford-upon-Avon.

November 29 1394 - Korean King Yi Seong-gye moves the capital from Kaesong to Hanyang, known now as Seoul.

## Cleftlands Officers' Contact Information

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## Upcoming Cleftlands Events

- Thursday, December 3 8pm EST Virtual Armorers' Guild Meeting - <https://www.facebook.com/events/327411918397483/>

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*Photo credit of Tater the SCA cat credited to Lady Gunnoa de la Grève. Photo credit of Lady Gunnoa de la Grève credited to Madi of Cleftlands.*

*Engraving of St. Martin on page 1 and the Italian spoon on page 3 are from 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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