

The Derneherald

Plate Mail -
You're doing it wrong



Chronicler's Corner

By Lady Isobel Mure

Welcome friends to the Winter issue of the Derneherald. Things in the Shire are moving along wonderfully. We have had arts and sciences classes with more on the way. Our fighters' are aching for the return of the warmer weather to get back into fighting shape for Pennsic. Remember to pre-reg or I'm sure Lady Sabine shall be quite cross. As many of you probably already know our former attendee and member Lady Rowen Hen Enaid is expecting. She's due in July very close to Pennsic. Another of our former attendee's is also expecting, Jackie, Pricilla and Torquil's daughter in law. I believe she is due in the early spring. So Hooba for the SCAdians on the way and their expectant families. The Shire auction is tonight so I hope you all brought your money and will bid well. The monthly Bardic Circle is next week so bring your stories and songs.

This Winter issue of the Derneherald, is a publication of the Shire of Dernehealde of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc.(SCA, Inc.) The Derneherald is available from Marjory Johnson, at 4 Ellis Street, Athens, Ohio, 45701. It is not a corporate publication of the SCA, Inc., and does not delineate SCA, Inc. policies. For information on reprinting any materials in this issue please contact the Chronicler, who will assist you

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Chronicler

Lady Isobel Mure

Marjory Johnson

From the Seneschal,

Hail and well met my friends.

We have made it almost through another winter and the sun of spring should warm us again soon. Take this time to learn what skills you can, dust off your armor or teach a class for soon the rush of spring will be upon us.

Remember that you get out of the shire what you put into it. Almost every officer can use a deputy or 3 to help with their tasks. While many enjoy what we do there are those who make it possible by giving of their free time to help keep things going. Like the great circus it is at times, there still are a lot of people behind the scenes that make it happen. Never feel you do not know enough or have not been around long enough to learn or help with a job. You will find that people are more than willing to teach if you are willing to learn.

Step up and be counted.

The SCA, at least one weekend a month and 2 weeks active duty every year.

Join Now!

Yours in service and proud of it,

-=Eidiard=-

Finding Your Niche

A Note from Zigana

So you are new to the SCA...how do you know what you want to do? There are so many practices to choose from and almost everything holds some interest for you. It can all be so overwhelming! Well, your first step is to take a moment and breathe. After that, I suggest you make a list. Write down everything that looks even remotely interesting to you. Then, go down your list; attend classes that teach things you like and ask for help from other SCA members who do the same things. There's only one rule that I must insist on: try anything once! You'll never know if you really like (or dislike) something until you try it.

I personally follow the rule of trying anything once and it has worked well for me thus far. I have attended classes on dance, calligraphy, juggling, drumming, embroidery, henna, and glass bead making. I have gone to practices for heavy weapons, archery, thrown weapons, and fencing. I've also researched some things on my own, such as the Irish language and the history of the Romany. Now, obviously I am not an expert at all of these things (if any of these things). And that is something that you have to remember - that you will not be perfect at everything immediately. You should try everything that you want to and then pick a couple A&S activities, combat practices, or other things that you are most interested in and work on those. By just working on the things that you most enjoy, you can become proficient at those much quicker. And remember you can always stop doing an activity if you become bored with it or master it - no one will judge you because you've changed your mind. You can also always pick something back up again later.

Remember you can do everything if you want to - but that is going to be fairly difficult. I would suggest not overdoing it to start with and slowly add to your repertoire of activities. Once you find your niche, you'll know and that will be something that you will always find joy in doing. Listen and learn from other members who are knowledgeable in the fields that you are interested in and share what you have learned with others. The SCA is a learning community with everyone sharing and learning from each other. Remember to try anything once and above all else, have FUN! That is what the SCA is all about after all!

Why you should submit to the Derneherald



There are 35 Middle Kingdom Scouts in this picture.

The Arts & Sciences

Anyone who has been in the SCA for any length of time is at some level, aware of the Arts and Sciences. If they have been to an event they will possibly have seen an A & S display, or seen A & S Competitions listed somewhere in the description of an event, in either the event flier or on an event's website. But what are "the Arts and Sciences?" Who does them, and why would anyone want to?

For someone who is so involved in the Arts and Sciences, I am having the hardest time writing about it. Perhaps it is because I've been so involved in A & S for so many years, that it is difficult to "take a step back" and try to see all these activities with a fresh perspective. But, I'm willing to try - and that is the important thing here.

The "field" of Arts and Sciences can be overwhelming. There are so many areas that fall into its range that it is difficult at best to find a place to start. While there are people who are more than willing to help a person new to the SCA in general and the arts and Sciences in particular, they also tend to forget what it was like when they were first starting out. Everyone who is an artisan, at whatever level, tends to focus primarily on what they know. I myself, have been guilty of "waxing loquacious" on the obscure topic of what sheep breeds might have been available to a 4th - 7th century Orcadian woman. While it is truly gratifying to know that there are other people out there who find this interesting, even they get tired of hearing about it every time they meet me.

So how can the "Arts and Sciences" be defined? My working definition is that what we see as an "Art" or "Science" was probably more along the lines of daily skills that helped to make a person of our chosen time period's life either a little easier, or moderately more enjoyable. Cooking, for example was a needed skill in every family - whether done by one person, or a group of people taking turns sharing the duties. Brewing, created something that not only lifted a person's spirits after a long day, but also imparted some nutrients. It would also have contributed to bonding of the community members. Woodworking was a skill that added some comfort to people's lives by making utensils, things to sit on and things to eat off of. Since everyone needs some form of protection from the elements, spinning, weaving and sewing were necessary skills. Dyeing falls in there to add color. Many of these skills were done communally as well as being solitary endeavors.

In today's SCA, while many people have various "daily living" skills (cooking being only one example that leaps readily to mind), most don't realize that these 'simple skills' can in the context of the SCA, take on a whole new level, elevating the simple into "an Art" or "a Science." But who does "the Arts and Sciences?" Basically, just about everyone in the SCA is actually involved in A & S, whether or not they identify it as such. A person making garb so they can attend an event, is involved in the sewing arts. The fighter who makes his or her own armor - from whatever material is acceptable to them and the regulations - is involved in the science of armoring. Most times though, these people don't recognize that they are doing what

others would identify as “an Art or Science” because they just see it as “getting something put together they need” in much the same way a 5th century farmer would.

The Arts and Sciences is not a “rarified” or mysterious realm where only the “garb geeks,” “history nuts,” or Laurels can gain admittance. It should be looked upon as a field of exploration, where anyone can venture forth and find something that they can “sink their teeth into” and have fun with. It was by having fun exploring new things that I eventually came to be chosen as the Baronial Arts and Sciences Champion. Nor have I let the things I have done to that point hold me back. Since becoming the A & S Champion, I have started exploring other arts and sciences. I hope to gain at least a passable level of competence in a larger variety of skills than I had when I was chosen in late 2009.

My challenge to all of you is – try something new.

“If you think you can do a thing or think you can't do a thing, you're right.” – Henry Ford

Finnseach

Baronial Arts and Sciences Champion 2009/10

Guild member – Withie and Woolmongers

The Anvil's Ring

By

T.H.L. Eidiard an Gobhainn, O.G.R. (X2), C.W., C.E., A.P.F.

Randomly Bardic Type Person, Storyteller and Standup Philosopher

Consider for a moment, what are your obligations as a Lord or Lady? When one has been elevated it is considered a mark of recognition and to some a reward. But I say it is not, it is an agreement between you and the Crown. It is an obligation you accept and should take very seriously. Let us look at the various obligations as considered in period.

"The lord had the duty to provide the fief for his vassal, to protect him, and to do him justice in his court."

So how do we provide for the fief? We, collectively, do so by our participation in the activities we have. This may be teaching classes, training fighters, or the day to day administrative operations of a group. We help at events, talk to people and get them involved in things. With this we continue our traditions and customs from one generation to the next.

We have an obligation to protect those in need. By protect I do not mean to draw a weapon and fight for them but through our acquired wisdom and knowledge we advise them, to keep them from harm's way. While that harm may be as simple as "Don't step into the list field if your not fighting" it may also include things such as "You should not be wearing that white belt and here is why." We should guide as best as we can and lead by example. We should be able to utter those fateful words "I don't know" without embarrassment as it shows a true assessment of ourselves. When we do say them we should them strive to find the answer.

"Justice in his court" is a little more difficult as this can be seen many ways. One could say it is to recommend them for awards, the justice of rewards for services well rendered. You could also take it as simply as in a group of people letting everyone have their turn to speak. Justice takes many forms but to view it as a form of courtesy does you no harm. Be wary of those who speak ill of others. This does little for all involved. Befriend all until they prove themselves to be other than you treat them.

We are all vassals to the Crown. As a good vassal we would be expected to provide the following:

The vassal owed fealty to his lord and the lord had the right to demand the services attached to the fief (military, judicial, administrative).

Fealty is a word bounced about quite a bit. But what is it? An oath of **fealty**, from the Latin *fideltas* (faithfulness), is a pledge of allegiance of one person to another. In medieval

Europe, fealty was sworn between two people, the obliged person (*vassal*) and a person of rank (*lord, lady, Baron, Baroness, etc.*). We hold the idea of honor in the highest regard and as such a sworn oath (giving your word) is the very framework of fealty. When we swear fealty we take upon ourselves the promise that we will act in good faith and serve where we can not just for the betterment of ourselves but for the betterment of all. Selflessness is considered a virtue among the honorable.

“The lord had the right to demand the services attached to the fief” Let’s be real here for a moment. Most of the time anyone “demands” anything from you in the SCA you are well within your rights to tell them to go take a flying leap off a cliff. But, it should not be unexpected to be asked. There is no law that makes us fight for our kingdom. No one can force you to serve in a Marshal’s Court and no one can make you become an officer. We must agree. To do such is to fulfill our obligation to the Crown, as all good subjects should. Not everyone can serve in all these places but in my view the dishwasher at an event is providing as much service to the Crown and the Dream as the King himself. We do what we can, as we can. Not everyone can do everything. From this we should take that we should do as we can. It may be as simple as letting the Troll run to the restroom while you watch things, to being willing to lead a suicide charge at Pennsic.

These are deep and heady subject that require more thought and introspection than I am willing to write about here. If I have made you pause for a moment and think about what you are doing or not doing, as the case may be, then this was well worth the time.

Face forward, eyes up and stretch as far as you can. You just might touch the stars. Even if you do not, you got closer than those who never tried.

-=Eidiard=-



The last thing many see when fighting against a spear.

Lord Rubein the Strong.

By Lord Rubein

Lord Rubein the Strong!
How mighty does he appear,
Behind his 'shroom Shield?

Lord Rubein the Wise!
Wanderer and Traveler,
Often lost at best

Lord Rubein the Tough!
Lovely mane and flowing locks
Looks like a Woman.

Lord Rubein the Mean !
Always picks fights with Bolotfr
Children beat him up!

Lord Rubein the Kind!
Chiverlous, noble and nice
Watch out for the Axe!

Lord Rubein the Brave!
Taunts the biggest Foe,
Then runs far Away!

Lord Rebein the Smart!
Has troble spelng his kname,
Counts with fingers too!

Rubein is a goof,
He's not a violent chap, Just
Overly playful!