

# Il Tempo

Newsletter of the Barony of Ponte Alto—Volume 16, Issue 9 ☞ September 2007

Barony of Ponte Alto, September 2007, Chroniclers 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition\* Lady Wulfwyn Ælfwines dothor



Marco Polo at the court of Kublai Khan, c. 1280, from an unknown tapestry

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# From the Chronicler...

Well, Pennsic has come and gone for another year, and hopefully everyone has dried out, finished your laundry, washed the mud from your cars and trucks and polished all the rust off your armor. We've all survived the rains, the winds, the mud, the heat and humidity, and can now look forward to next year, and a much drier war!

I was proud to be among those present at Their Excellency's final Pennsic Court and witness the many Pontoons acknowledged by their Majesties during Their visit as well as by our own Baron and Baroness, Marcellus and Belphebe. Though it was raining at the time, I saw many happy smiling faces and was proud so many gentles came out and braved the storm for court.

It would personally like to take this opportunity to thank Their Majesties Valharic and Arielle for allowing me and many other Pontoons to serve in your retinue. It's been wonderful getting to know you better, and enjoy all the little behind the scenes things I was able to share with you. I hope to see you both at many events in the future.

The Baronial polling will be coming out in the next few weeks. I urge each and every one of you to return your letters as soon as possible. We're planning a wonderful event for the Investiture in February. If you don't reside within the Barony's limits, you can still send in a letter of recommendation for your choice of candidates to TRH's, then to be TRM's, Logan and Rowan after Coronation.

Our next local event, of course, will be Coronation. This time it's close by in our nearby Canton of Sudentorre. So come out and show the visitors from around the Kingdom the courtesy and pride we have in Ponte Alto. Support our local artisans in the A&S displays, classes and competitions; join the armored combat fighters, archers and rapier fighters either on the list or cheering them from the sidelines. It promises to be a busy weekend with plenty of activities to keep young and old occupied.

Lady Wulfwyn Aelfwines dohtor  
Chronicler, Barony of Ponte Alto

# Baronial Officers

## *Baron and Baroness of Ponte Alto*

Baron Marcellus Capozziello da Napoli (Bob Capozello) &  
Baroness Belphoebe de Givet (Laura Martinez)  
(H) (703) 625-3883  
baron AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org  
baroness AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org  
baronage AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

## *Seneschal (President)*

Lady Katharine Devereaux (Kimberly Barker)  
181 E Reed Ave. #107  
Alexandria, VA 22305  
(M) (571) 239-2183  
seneschal AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

## **Deputy Seneschal**

Master Tirloch of Tallaght (Tom Bilodeau)  
13456 Cobra Court  
Oak Hill, VA 20171  
(H) (703) 437-6271  
GMT53 AT ravenstreet.org

## *Chancellor of Youth Activities (Children's Activities)*

Lady Talitha of Avalon (Talitha Powell)  
Lorton, VA  
(H) (703) 690-2732  
mom AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

## *Chancellor of the Exchequer (Treasurer)*

Lady Millicent Chandler (Melanie Cozad)  
976 Holborn Court  
Sterling, VA 20164  
(H) (703) 430-3675  
exchequer AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

## **Deputy Chancellor of the Exchequer**

Lady Celia of Rosedale (Tamara Brown)  
3714 Sudley Ford Court  
Fairfax, VA 22033-4811  
(H) (703) 378-2441  
celia AT ravenstreet.org

## *Chamberlain*

Lady Millicent Chandler (Melanie Cozad)  
976 Holborn Court  
Sterling, VA 20164  
(H) (703) 430-3675  
chamberlain AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

## *Knight Marshal*

Lord Duncan the Elder (Duncan Cooper)  
(H) (703) 801-6867  
marshal AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

## **Deputy Knight Marshal**

Lord Christopher Hare (Chris Harrop)  
harrophare AT aol.com

## **Deputy Knight Marshal**

Baroness Agnes Daunce (Nellie Miller)  
14201 Arbor Forest Drive #301  
Rockville, MD 20850  
(H) (301) 309-0419  
agnes\_daunce AT yahoo.com

## **Deputy Knight Marshal**

Lord Connor Sinclair (Kevin Houghton)  
connorsinclair AT yahoo.com

## *Rapier Marshal*

Lord Geoffrey Clywd (Jeff Williams)  
rapier AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

## **Deputy Rapier Marshal**

Mistress (Baroness) Greta Klusenaere (Barbara Reed)  
(H) (703) 960-5388  
bereed26 AT yahoo.com

## **Deputy Rapier Marshal**

Baroness Catalina dell'Acqua (Jennifer Marsten)  
akgnome AT yahoo.com

## **Deputy Rapier Marshal**

Baron Marcellus Capozziello da Napoli (Bob Capozello)  
(H) (703) 625-3883  
afpopa AT cox.net

## **Deputy Rapier Marshal**

Baroness Belphoebe de Givet (Laura Martinez)  
(703) 625-3883 (H)  
belfebe AT yahoo.com

## *Archery Marshal*

Lord Miles de Locwode (Mike Emrich)  
10106 Copper Court  
Oakton, VA 22124  
(H) (703) 242-2339, (M) (703) 395-9487  
archery AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

**Deputy Archery Marshal**

Lady Brigid O'Hara (Karen Miller)  
11416 Bronzedale Dr  
Oakton, VA 22124  
(703) 620-4945 (H)  
mill3rs AT yahoo.com

*Minister of Arts & Sciences*

Lady Renata von Hentzau (Clare Cronin)  
3304 Willow Crescent Drive, Apt. 34  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
moas AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

**Deputy Minister of Arts & Sciences**

Lady Millicent Chandler (Melanie Cozad) (music deputy)  
976 Holborn Court  
Sterling, VA 20164  
(H) (703) 430-3675

**Deputy Minister of Arts & Sciences**

Lady Perronelle la peintre  
7588 Seabrook Lane  
Springfield, VA 22153  
(H) (703) 455-0298

*Chatelaine (Newcomers)*

Lord James de Biblesworth (James Barker)  
(H) (703) 338-4057  
flonzy AT hotmail.com  
chatelaine AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

**Deputy Chatelaine**

Flora de Bayeaux (Jerri Lyn Mooney)  
(M) (703) 945-0515  
weebaby58 AT hotmail.com

*Gold Key (Loaner Costumes)*

Lord James de Biblesworth (James Barker)  
(H) (703) 338-4057  
demos AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

**Deputy for Demos**

Lord James de Biblesworth (James Barker)  
(H) (703) 338-4057  
demos AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

*Herald*

Lady Katharina von Bayern (Tracy Fussell)  
(703) 994-3960 (H)  
herald AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

**Deputy Herald**

Lord Connor Sinclair (Kevin Houghton)  
connorsinclair AT yahoo.com

*Minister of the Lists*

Lady Delphina the Mad (Charlene Ratliff)  
mol AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

**Deputy Minister of the Lists**

Countess Denise Duvalier (Denise Hundley)  
(H) (703) 339-4114  
DCADenise AT aol.com

*Chronicler (Newsletter)*

Lady Wulfwyn Ælfwines dohtor (Patricia Cheshire)  
Snoleopard4 AT aol.com  
chronicler AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

**Deputy Chronicler**

Lady Marie-Therese Normand (Mary Bowles)  
6039 Terrapin Pl., Alexandria, VA 22310  
mariatheresapontoon@yahoo.com

*Web Minister*

Lord James de Biblesworth (James Barker)  
(H) (703) 338-4057  
flonzy AT hotmail.com  
webminister AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

**Deputy Web Minister**

Lady Brigid O'Hara (Karen Miller)  
11416 Bronzedale Dr  
Oakton, VA 22124  
(703) 620-4945 (H)  
mill3rs AT yahoo.com

*Members of the Baronial Guard*

Baroness Catalina dell'Acqua (Captain)  
Lord Geoffrey Clywd  
Myghell O'Kelly

*Baronial Noteables*

**Baronial Warlord**, Lord Connor Sinclair (Kevin Houghton)  
warlord AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org  
**Baronial Heavy Champion**, Lord Jürgen van der Vols (Joorkin Volz)  
(Jeffrey French)  
heavychamp AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org  
**Baronial Rapier Champion**, Hadrurus  
rapierchamp AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org  
**Baronial Archery Champion**, Anais Enderwick (RJ Crocker)  
archerychamp AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org  
**Baronial Artisan**, Lord James de Biblesworth (James Barker)  
artisan AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org  
**Baronial Bard**, Lady Talitha of Avalon (Talitha Powell)  
bard AT pontealto.atlantia.sca.org

# Baronial Meeting Minutes

**MEETING** August 27, 2007 **Time:** 6pm

## Officers

### Seneschal

Polling will be going out prior to Chalice. Voted on and approved allocating \$150 for polling materials.

Still looking for a Deputy, see the Seneschal.

### Exchequer

\$8995.58 currently in account.

### Heavy Marshall

Practice moving to indoor facilities on September 6, will still have outdoor area as well. E-mail will go out shortly.

Practice canceled this week due to Coronation weekend.

### Rapier

Practice returning to school September 6.

Sunday practiced cancelled next Sunday due to Coronation weekend

### Archery Marshall

All archery points won at Pennsic. Ponte Alto was well represented.

Practices still on Friday nights and Sunday practice with Stierbach. Two days of archery planned at Coronation.

### A&S

Several Pontoons participated in Pennsic Choir as well as displaying in A&S.

There will be many A&S events at Coronation.

### Chatelaine

Newcomers meeting will be on August 28. There will be a Newcomers Point at Chalice.

### Herald

Not here

### MOL

Not here

### Chronicler

September issue of Il Tempo to go out this week.

Please send in your articles, artwork, fiction, etc.

### Webmaster

Will post a photo of the Baron and Baroness in upcoming issues.

### Baron and Baroness

Thanks to everyone that was at Pennsic Baronial Court, even with the storms. Many Pontoons were recognized by Their Majesties; Jurgen received the Coral Branch, William the Opal, Brigid the Sharks Tooth, Matt the Fountain, Thomas is the Youth Rapier Champion for Atlantia.

Baronial Court recognized James and William with the Garland. Tirloch received the Onore del Ponte d'Oro, Miles and Sir Guy the Onore del Ponte di Ferro. Recognized everyone that helped in camp.

At Atlantian Court Celia, Anne of Carthew, and Allasondrea de Fano received the Order of the Gilded Portcullis.

Will be at Coronation, urge everyone to participate in A&S and other activities.

The Baroness will not be at Chalice, but the Baron will.

Acknowledged that whoever wins the polling, they are sure there will be the same support for them.

Both will be at University and War of the Wings.

## Baronial Notables

### War Lord

Thanks to everyone that came out and fought at Pennsic. Ponte Alto did very well and was well represented.

Three melee events coming up; Siege of Glengary, Crusades, and War of the Wings, and would like to see as many fighters as possible attend.

Please contact Connor for more information and to plan travel. Would like to start more northern melee practices.

### Artisan

Displayed items at Pennsic; shoes, gloves and armor.

### Bard

Great bardic circle after Pennsic Baronial Court.

Recap of Pennsic

Camp ran very well and breakdown went well. Thanks to everyone that came and helped with the cleanup. \$53 left to add to Pennsic fund.

Need new home for Pennsic supplies, will need to research new storage facilities for larger size.

## Events

### Chalice

HRM Rowan will be attending. Everything is set and ready for the event, advertising will be starting soon. Voted on and approved \$100 for starting cash for troll. Looking for volunteers for the Children's Corner to help out for approximately 2 hours.

We will be having a fundraising lunch to benefit the Barony, Wulfwyn will organize the lunch. The cost will be \$5.00. Voted on and approved \$100 for luncheon.

Celia volunteered to head Troll.

### Barony Party

The subject was brought up of having a Baronial Party since the November event was canceled. It was agreed to discuss this at a later time.

**Investiture/Birthday**

No new information

**Bloodbath**

No new information

**Old Business**

The Baroness has received 50 each of the tokens for the Onore del Ponte d'Oro and the Onore del Ponte di Ferro. Would like to plan a time to enamel the tokens. Should receive additional tokens in the future.

The Autocrat Database has a total of 11 sign-ups currently.

**New Business**

HRH's letter was discussed. The Barony financial policy will not change as we have always handled those sitting at head table silently. No one will be specifically asked to pay for feast if they have not already paid in advance.

**Meeting ended: 6:55 Attendees: 19**



## *The Barony of Ponte Alto Financial Policy*

### 1. Ponte Alto Financial Policy

- a. Ponte Alto Financial Policy shall be accepted by a majority vote of the populace of the group and replace all previous financial policies and may be amended or replaced by a majority vote of the group.
- b. Ponte Alto Financial Policy shall be reviewed yearly.
- c. Ponte Alto Financial Policy is superseded by: Kingdom Exchequer Policy, Kingdom Law, Kingdom Financial Policy, Society Exchequer Policy, Corpora, Federal, and State Law.

### 2. Financial Committee

- a. The Financial Committee
  - i. Defined as all paid members of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc who attend the Barony of Ponte Alto's business meeting.
  - ii. At business meetings all financial needs will be brought to the Financial Committee for voting purposes. A majority vote will allow the money to be spent. In the event of a tie, the vote shall be moved to the Emergency Financial Committee. The Financial Committee may allocate money only up to the amount that is currently in the General Fund and no greater.
  - iii. A roster of paid members shall be kept by the Exchequer.
- b. The Emergency Financial Committee
  - i. Emergencies are defined as money that needs to be spent before the next business meeting.
  - ii. This Committee shall consist of the Exchequer, the Seneschal, and a third officer whose position rotates on an annual basis each January. The rotation shall be Knight Marshal, Minister of Arts and Sciences, Chatelaine, Herald, Minister of the Lists, Chronicler, & Web Minister. Each member of the Emergency Financial Committee must be a paid member of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc, be at least 18 years of age, and possess a valid warrant for their office.
  - iii. Members of the Emergency Financial Committee shall have one vote. Should a member recuse himself/herself from a vote in which there is a conflict of interest or appearance of impropriety, a Deputy Exchequer shall cast the third vote.
  - iv. Spending approval is permitted up to \$1000 unless the spending is for a site fee. Spending approval is permitted up to \$2000 for a site fee.
  - v. Meeting of this Emergency Financial Committee may be in person, over the phone, or via email.

### 3. The Chancellor of the Exchequer

- a. The Exchequer shall maintain a checking account with appropriate signature cards for the group, file all annual, quarterly and event reports as required by Kingdom and Society law and policy, enforce and maintain the group's financial policy, serve as chairperson of the group's Emergency Financial Committee and hold primary responsibility for coordinating with other members of the Emergency Financial Committee, and communicating the committee's actions with the populace.
- b. The Exchequer shall, upon request, provide access to the group's financial reports and books to any member of the group and shall publish to the group the annual doomsday report in the local newsletter, with a copy sent to the Kingdom Chancellor of the Exchequer.
- c. The Exchequer shall pursue any NSF (non-sufficient funds) checks received by the group according to the policy outlined in the Chancellor of the Exchequer Local Officer's Reference Handbook.

### 4. Disbursement of Funds

- a. Signatories on all Baronial accounts shall be the exchequer, deputy exchequer, and seneschal.
- b. Authorization for disbursement of funds.
  - i. For the routine expenses of meeting room rental, storage facility rental, and newsletter publication disbursement may be authorized by either the seneschal or the exchequer. The exchequer shall report all such expenses at the Barony meeting following their disbursement.



ii. For all other expenses, authorization shall require a majority approval by the Financial Committee. Prior to voting, proof of membership will be required for those baronial members wishing to vote at the meeting, this includes the baronial officers and the Baron and Baroness of Ponte Alto. The Exchequer shall verify membership before the vote.

## 5. Events

a. The autocrat shall present a written, itemized budget for an event to the Financial Committee three months prior to the event date and before any expenditure for the event is made and before the event flyer has been published. The Barony may vote to waive this provision under exceptional circumstances. (Example: The Barony is asked to host a Kingdom event in less than three months.)

i. The budget may include provisions to waive gate and feast fees for sitting Monarchs, Their Heirs, and the event's Head Cook.

ii. The budget may include provisions to waive gate fees for the event's Autocrat and Head Troll.

b. The Financial Committee must authorize any itemized expenditure in excess of the approved amount.

c. Event reservations and check in (troll):

i. All checks shall be deposited in a timely manner.

ii. No funds shall be removed from the cash box except as change for funds received.

d. The Exchequer must receive event-related receipts and requests for reimbursement no later than five business days after the event.

e. Event Refunds shall be provided as follows:

i. Feast refund may be provided if the feast spot was resold to another attendee. No refunds shall be provided if the event does not make a profit.

ii. The Exchequer must receive refund requests in writing no later than five business days after the event.

iii. All refunds shall be paid by check from the group's checking account.

iv. No refund shall be issued until the event books have been closed and all reservation checks have cleared.

f. The event financial report shall be presented to the populace at the first regular business meeting of the group after the event books have been closed.

g. Any photocopies of checks shall be shredded by the Exchequer after the books have been closed.

## 6. Special Funds

a. Any funds raised for a specific purpose will be maintained as separately allocated for a period of one year. After this time, if they have not been spent, they will be transferred to general funds. These funds will be maintained within the baronial checking account.

b. The Exchequer must receive special fund-related receipts and requests for reimbursement within sixty days of purchase.

# Knight Marshal

Greetings Heavy Weapons Fighters of Ponte Alto and Its Environs!

Starting next week on Thursday, September 6th, the Thursday night heavy weapons practice will be held at Lemon Road ES in the cafeteria and outdoors under the lights on the right side of the school from 6:00 to 9:00 PM.

Directions: From The Beltway: Get off at the Tysons Corner exit onto Leesburg Pike (Route 7) in the direction of Falls Church. Proceed about one mile until the intersection with Idylwood Road. Turn left onto Idlywood Road and proceed on this winding street about four blocks. The school is on the left. Park in front and enter the main entrance on the right end of building or follow the driveway on the right past the school and park in the back by the soccer field.

From I-66 Highway: Get off at the Tysons Corner- Falls Church exit onto Leesburg Pike in the direction of Tysons Corner. Proceed to the first light and make a right onto Idylwood Road. Follow the instructions above. Enter the building by the front main entrance; proceed straight ahead to the cafeteria entrance on the right. You may exit to the outdoors through the doorway at the back of the cafeteria.

On some nights we may be practicing in the gymnasium. Proceed past the cafeteria entrances and turn left into the hallway which leads past the stairs to the second floor and walk past the stairs to the entrance to the gym.

See you next week at Lemon Road Elementary

Yours in Service,  
Duncan The Elder  
Knight Marshal of Ponte Alto

# Monthly Calendar

September 2007

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
				Fall Coronation (R, H) 4:30 pm Archery Practice	1 Fall Coronation (R, H)	2 Fall Coronation (R, H)
3 7:30 pm Alle Psallite Fall Coronation (R, H)	4 7 pm Scriptorium	5 Viking Clothes Sewing	6 6 pm Rapier Practice 6 pm Heavy Weapons Practice (School)	7 Southern Atlantian Archery Day 4:30 pm Archery Practice	8 Southern Atlantian Archery Day Masters of Defense Battles of Britain	9 Southern Atlantian Archery Day Noon Outdoor Heavy Weapons and Rapier Practice
10 7:30 pm Alle Psallite	11	12 7 pm Weaving Night	13 6 pm Rapier Practice 6 pm Heavy Weapons Practice	14 <b>Chalice of the Sun Gods IV</b> Glory Wars 4:30 pm Archery Practice	15 <b>Chalice of the Sun Gods IV</b> Glory Wars	16 <b>Chalice of the Sun Gods IV</b> Glory Wars Noon Outdoor Heavy Weapons and Rapier Practice
17 7:30 pm Alle Psallite	18 New Comers Meeting	19	20 6 pm Rapier Practice 6 pm Heavy Weapons Practice	21 Journey to the Crusades Siege of Glengary 4:30 pm Archery Practice	22 Journey to the Crusades Siege of Glengary	23 Journey to the Crusades Siege of Glengary Noon Outdoor Heavy Weapons and Rapier Practice
24 7:30 pm Alle Psallite	25	26 7 pm Armor Night	27 6 pm Rapier Practice 6 pm Heavy Weapons Practice	28 4:30 pm Archery Practice 7:30pm Ponte Alto/Steirbach Bardic	29 Bloodlines Games Tourney	30 Noon Outdoor Heavy Weapons and Rapier Practice

\* = Baronial Progress

# Events

## Baronial Progress for September

Date	Event
August/September 31-3	Fall Coronation (R, H)
<b>14-16</b>	<b>Chalice of the Sun Gods IV</b>

### September 2007 Calendar of Scheduled Events

Date	Event	Group	Location
August/September 31-3	Fall Coronation (R, H)	Sudentorre	Haymarket, VA
7-9	Southern Atlantian Archery Day	Crois Brigte	Boonville, NC
8	Masters of Defense	Lochmere	Elkridge, MD
8	Battles of Britain	Yarnvid	Amelia, VA
<b>14-16</b>	<b>Chalice of the Sun Gods IV</b>	<b>Ponte Alto</b>	<b>Triangle, VA</b>
14-16	Glory Wars	Hindscroft	Booneville, NC
Cancelled	Celtic Cattle Raids 5	Nimenefeld	Apex, NC
21-23	Journey to the Crusades	Caer Gelynniog	Palmyra, VA
21-23	Siege of Glengary	Highland Foorde	Hedgesville, WV
Cancelled	Storvik Baronial Birthday	Storvik	Upper Marlboro, MD
29	Bloodlines	Tir-y-Don	Newport News, VA
29	Games Tourney	Isenfir	Weyers Cave, VA

# Weekly Activities

Weaving night will resume in March on the Second Wednesday of the month at the home of Lord Jürgen van der Vols (Joorkin Volz) (jcfrench AT mac.com), whom you should contact for more information and directions.

Armoring night will resume in March on the Fourth Wednesday of the month at the home of Lord Jürgen van der Vols (Joorkin Volz) (jcfrench AT mac.com), whom you should contact for more information and directions.

This months New Comers Meeting will be Tuesday September 18th at the home of Lord Jurgen and Flora in Fairfax from starting at 7pm. Their address is: 4964 Swinton Dr., Fairfax VA 22032. If you need to contact Flora her email is flora.bayeaux@gmail.com. Jurgen and Flora's phone number is 703-323-5387.

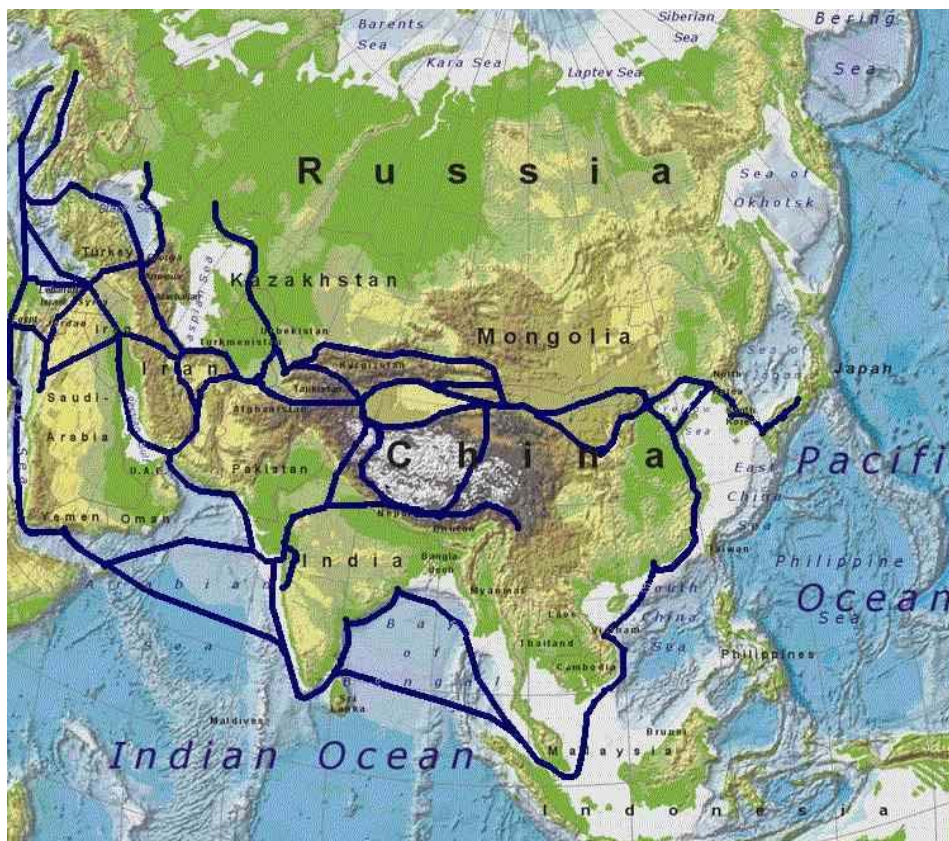
Wednesday September 5th at 6:30pm; it is open to anyone focused on making Viking clothing (male and female). We can help with making patterns or getting ideas going if you are interested in Viking but have no idea what's what. Here are some pictures of the Viking and Anglo Saxon outfits we have done: <http://www.historiclife.com/HistoricalClothing/10th.htm> OR <http://www.historiclife.com/HistoricalClothing/11th.htm>. Our Address: 181 E Reed Ave, Alexandria VA 22305. We are in the condo on the corner; park on the street. We on the ground floor and have a stair case to a back door on E Reed Ave; I will mark our staircase with a flag or a shield. Ours is the tallest staircase furthest from RT 1. James de Biblesworth # 703 338 4057 if you get lost

SUNDAY	
<b>Ponte Alto Baronial Business Meeting</b>	Fourth Sunday of the month at 6 pm at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Idylwood Road, Falls Church. Baronial Business Meeting (Fourth Sunday of each month, except December) The meeting is at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, 7426 Idlywood Rd., Falls Church. Take your best route to I-66. Get off at the exit for Route 7 West (Tysons Corner). Turn left at the first light after the interchange onto Idlywood Rd. The church is up the hill on the right about 1/4 mile.
<b>Outdoor Heavy Weapons Practice</b>	Weather permitting, Noon - Dark, outdoors at Tysons-Pimmit Park, behind Tysons-Pimmit Library, Falls Church. Please contact the Baronial Knight Marshal for information. Sunday Fight Practice Directions. Practice is behind the Tysons-Pimmit Regional Library 7584 Leesburg Pike, Falls Church. Take your best route to I-495. Get off at the exit for Route 7 East (Falls Church). The library is on the left about 1 mile. Park in the library lot and go down the hill to the park.
MONDAY	
<b>Alle Psallite (Vocal Music)</b>	Every Monday, 7:30-9 pm in Herndon. Contact Mistress Anne of Carthew (anne AT ravenstreet.org) For more information or directions. Music files can be found at <a href="http://www.ravenstreet.org/Anne/alle_psallite/alle_psallite.htm">http://www.ravenstreet.org/Anne/alle_psallite/alle_psallite.htm</a> and on the Yahoo Group AllePsallite.
<b>Asian Night (Exploration of all things Asian)</b>	Second Monday of every month, starts at 6:30 in Centreville. Contact Lady Áine Sindradóttir (ellen.m.davis AT att.net, (703) 815-0310 (H)) or Lord li Saburou Katsumori (logan AT modzer0.cs.uaf.edu) for information or directions.
TUESDAY	
<b>Ponte Alto Scriptorium</b>	Meets the first Tuesday of the month at 7 pm. Contact Lady Brigid O'Hara (mill3rs AT yahoo.com, (703) 620-4945 (H)) for information and directions.
WEDNESDAY	
<b>Weaving Night</b>	Second Wednesdays of every month from 7-9 pm, at the home of Lord Jürgen van der Vols (Joorkin Volz) (jcfrench AT mac.com). Contact Lord Jürgen van der Vols for information and directions.
<b>Armoring Night</b>	Fourth Wednesdays of every month from 7-9 pm, at the home of Lord Jürgen van der Vols (Joorkin Volz) (jcfrench AT mac.com). Contact Lord Jürgen van der Vols for information and directions
THURSDAY	

<b>Rapier Practice</b>	Every Thursday at ShreveWood Elementary school from 6 pm to 9 pm. Please use the rear entrance to the cafeteria. Please contact the Baronial Rapier Marshal for more information. Indoor Rapier Directions. This is a school location activity.
<b>Heavy Weapons Practice</b>	Lemon Road Elementary School on Idylwood Road, 6 pm - 9 pm. Practice is geared to developing beginning and intermediate fighters through intensive hands on training with experienced instructors, as well to providing ample opportunity for more advanced fighters to sparr with knight level combatants. All are welcome. Contact the Baronial Knight Marshal for more information. Indoor Heavy Directions. This is a school location activity.
<b>FRIDAY</b>	
<b>Ponte Alto/Stierbach Archery Practice</b>	Fridays from 4:30 pm until 8 pm, the indoor season archery practice site is Bull Run Regional Park's shooting center. Archery Practice Directions. Practices are jointly held with Stierbach. You may also contact the Baronial Archery Marshal for carpool or other information. Contact and practice time/location information for Stierbach practices can be found at the Stierbach Archery website: <a href="http://mysite.verizon.net/vze4ks38/archery/main.html">http://mysite.verizon.net/vze4ks38/archery/main.html</a> .
<b>Ponte Alto A&amp;S Night</b>	May meet on a Friday during the month, as posted at the top of this page. Contact Lady Perronelle la peintre (dwatsonirwin AT cox.net, (703) 455-0298 (H)) for information and directions.
<b>Stierbach/Ponte Alto Bardic</b>	Come and share your songs and stories! Meets the fourth Friday of the month at 7:30 pm. Contact Baroness Briana Maclukas (darbyjanieAT hotmail.com) for information.
<b>MONTHLY</b>	
<b>SCA Newcomer Meetings</b>	Newcomer Meetings occur once a month on a weeknight from 7-9 pm at the homes of various members of the Barony. Contact the Baronial Chatelaine for information, or check out the top of this page for the recently posted information.
<b>Embroidery Night</b>	Their Excellencies of Ponte Alto host a monthly embroidery night starting at 7:30 pm. Contact the Baron and Baroness for more information, or check out the top of this page for the recently posted information.

\* **Note on school locations for activities:** There will be no activities at schools during school holidays or on other days when Fairfax County schools are closed or all nighttime school recreational activities are cancelled. Notification of cancellation or alternate site location will be posted on the web as soon as possible. You can visit the Fairfax County Public Schools Emergency Announcement page for school closure status: <http://fcps.edu/news/emerg.htm>

# the Real Middle-ages



**The Silk Road Routes**

## *The Silk Road*

The Silk Road, or Silk Route, is an interconnected series of ancient trade routes through various regions of the Asian continent mainly connecting China with Asia Minor and the Mediterranean. It extends over 5,000 miles (on land and sea). Trade on the Silk Route was a significant factor in the development of the great civilizations of China, Egypt, Persia, Mesopotamia, India and Rome, and helped to lay the foundations for the modern world.

As it extends westwards from the commercial centers of North China, the continental Silk Road divides into north and south routes to avoid the Tibetan Plateau.

The northern route passes through the Bulgar–Kypchak region. It travels northwest through the Chinese province of Gansu, and splits into three further routes, two of them passing north and south of the Taklamakan Desert to rejoin at Kashgar; and the other going north of the Tien Shan mountains through Turfan and Almaty, in what is now southeast Kazakhstan.

All of these routes join up at Kokand in the

Rergana Valley, and the roads continue west across the Jarakum Desert towards Merv, joining the southern route briefly.

One route turns northwest along the Amu Darya river including Bukhara and Samarkand the center of Silk Road trade to the Aral Sea, through ancient civilizations under the present site of Astrakhan, and on to the Crimean peninsula. From there it crosses the Balck Sea, Marmara Sea and the Balkans to Venice, another crosses the Caspian Sea and across the Caucasus to the Black Sea in Georgia, thence to Constantinople.

The southern route is mainly a single route running through northern India, then the Turkestan–Khorasan region into Mesopotamia and Anatolia; having southward spurs enabling the journey to be completed by sea from various points. It runs south through the Sichuan Basin in China and crosses the high mountains into northeast India, probably via the Ancient tea route. It then travels west along the Brahmaputra and Ganges river plains, possibly joining the Grand Trunk Road west of Varanasi. It runs through northern Pakistan and over the Hindu Kush mountains to rejoin the northern route briefly near Merv.

It then follows an almost straight line west through mountainous northern Iran and the northern tip of the Syrian Desert to the Levant. From there Mediterranean trading ships sailed regular routes to Italy, and land routes went either north through Anatolia or south to North Africa.

## *History*

The first major step in opening the Silk Road between the East and the West came with the expansion of Alexander the Great's empire into Central Asia. In 329 BC, at the mouth of the Fergana Valley in Tajikistan he founded the city of Aezandria Eschate or "Alexandria The Furthest". This later became a major staging point on the northern Silk Route.

In 323 BC, Alexander the Great's successors, the Ptolemies, took control of Egypt. They actively promoted trade with Mesopotamia, India, and East Africa through their Red Sea ports and over land. This was assisted by a number of intermediaries, especially the Nabataeans and other Arabs.

The Greeks remained in Central Asia for the next three centuries, first through the administration of the Seleucid Empire, and then with the establishment of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom in Bactria. They continued to expand eastward, especially during the reign of Euthydemus (230–200 BC) who extended his control beyond Alexandria Eschate to Sogdiana. There are indications that he may have led expeditions as far as Kashgar in Chinese Turkestan, leading to the first known contacts between China and the West around 200 BC.

Soon after the Roman conquest of Egypt in 30 BC, regular communications and trade between India, Southeast Asia, Sri Lanka, China, the Middle East, Africa and Europe blossomed on an unprecedented scale. The party of Maes Titianus became the travelers who penetrated farthest east along the Silk Road from the Mediterranean world, probably with the aim of regularizing contacts and reducing the role of middlemen, during one of the lulls in Rome's intermittent wars with Parthia, which repeatedly obstructed movement along the Silk Road. Land and maritime routes were closely linked, and novel products, technologies and ideas began to spread across the continents of Europe, Asia and Africa. Intercontinental trade and communication became regular, organized, and protected by the 'Great Powers.' Intense trade with the Roman Empire followed soon, confirmed by the Roman craze for Chinese silk, supplied through the Parthians, even though the Romans thought silk was obtained from trees. This belief was affirmed by Seneca the Younger in his *Hippolytus* and by Virgil in his *Georgics*. Notably, Pliny the Elder knew better. Speaking of the bombyx or silk moth, he wrote in his *Natural Histories*, "They weave webs, like spiders, that become a luxurious clothing material for women, called silk.

The Senate issued, in vain, several edicts to prohibit the wearing of silk, on economic and moral grounds: the importation of Chinese silk caused a huge outflow of gold, and silk clothes were considered to be decadent and immoral.

The main traders during Antiquity were the Indian and Bactrian Traders, then from the fifth to the eighth century. The Sogdian traders, then the Persian traders.

The unification of Central Asia and Northern India within Kushan empire in the first to third centuries reinforced the role of the powerful merchants from Bactria and Taxila. They fostered multi-cultural interaction as indicated by their 2nd century treasure hoards filled with products from the Greco-Roman world, China and India, such as in the archeological site of Begram.

The heyday of the Silk Road corresponds to that of the Byzantine Empire in its west end, Sassanid Empire Period to Il Khanate Period in the Nile-Oxus section and Three Kingdoms to Yuan Dynasty in the Sinitic zone in its east end. Trade between East and West also developed on the sea, between Alexandria in Egypt and Guangzhou in China, fostering the expansion of Roman trading posts in India. Historians also talk of a "Porcelain Route" or "Silk Route" across the Indian Ocean. The Silk Road represents an early phenomenon of political and cultural integration due to inter-regional trade. In its heyday, the Silk Road sustained an international culture that strung together groups as diverse as the Magyars, Armenians, and Chinese.

Under its strong integrating dynamics on the one hand and the impacts of change it transmitted on the other, tribal societies previously living in isolation along the Silk Road or pastoralists who were of barbarian cultural development were drawn to the riches and opportunities of the civilizations connected by the Silk Road, taking on the trades of marauders or mercenaries. Many barbarian tribes became skilled warriors able to conquer rich cities and fertile lands, and forge strong military empires.

The Mongol expansion throughout the Asian continent from around 1215 to 1360 helped bring political stability and re-establish the Silk Road. Between 1325-1354, a Moroccan Muslim traveler, Ibn Battuta passed through the present day Middle-east and took the Silk Road from Tabriz, the first major city in the region to open its gates to the Mongols.. In the late 13th century, a Venetian explorer named Marco Polo became one of the first Europeans to travel the Silk Road to China. Westerners became more aware of the Far East when Polo documented his travels in *Il Milione*. He was followed by numerous Christian missionaries to the East and other travelers. Luxury goods were traded from one middleman to another, from China to the West, resulting in high prices for the trade goods.

With the disintegration of the Mongol Empire also came discontinuation of the Silk Road's political, cultural and economic unity. Turkmeni marching lords seized the western part of the Silk Road — the decaying Byzantine Empire. After the Mongol Empire, the great political powers along the Silk Road became economically and culturally separated. Accompanying the crystallization of regional states was the decline of nomad power, partly due to the devastation of the Black Death and partly due to the encroachment of sedentary civilizations equipped with gunpowder.

The effect of gunpowder and early modernity on Europe was the integration of territorial states and increasing mercantilism; whereas on the Silk Road, gunpowder and early modernity had the opposite impact: the level of integration of the Mongol Empire could not be maintained, and trade declined, though partly due to an increase in European maritime exchanges.

The Silk Road stopped serving as a shipping route for silk around 1400.

**\*The source of this article is Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. The text of this article is licensed under the GFDL.**



# Armoring and Warfare

Articles on the sport of fighting in the SCA. By Lady Marie-Thérèse Normand

## *How to make the perfect sword.*

For years I've tried to find the perfect sword, the perfect swing, and the perfect combination to better my fight. The swing and combinations were easy, practice on the pell and slow work. The sword was not. I've planed and cut and worked many different pieces of rattan. I've received lots of advice on how to make my sword, and have given each piece of advice a test on my workbench. But still the perfect sword has eluded me, that is, until now.

Now, after over thirty sticks and fourteen years of SCA fighting, I think I've found the perfect sword. I started with a three inch round piece of rattan, with a tight non-porous grain. I measured out a 36-inch stick, cut it down and tested the length by swinging it to make sure it wasn't too long and didn't hit the ground when I fell into stance. I then got my handy dandy sharpie out of the toolbox, marked off where my grip felt comfortable, and drew a line above and below my hand, that encircled the rattan handle all the way around (Fig. 1). I then put a marker notch above my hand along the back spine of the stick between my thumb and forefinger (Fig. 1) before removing my hand. This gave me the basis for my grip and the back edge of the blade where I would take the least amount of wood off my stick. I also made certain at this point that my hand and my basket hilt fit on the blade in the same place. If they didn't I moved my hand positioning up or down the handle depending on where my basket hilt needed to be, so that the tang had as little rattan hanging at the bottom as possible (Fig. 2). I then marked where the tangs from the basket hilt would be positioned, clamped the basket hilt on the stick, and gave it a few experimental swings to gauge balance before deciding I needed to rotate the basket out away from my hand slightly to get a better rotation from the sword, because the basket hilt was interfering with my swing by catching on the back of my hand/demi-gauntlet. (*Note: This is a common occurrence and should be paid attention to before you start shaping your grip.*) I then marked my basket hilt's new tang positions and X-ed out the old markings before removing the basket hilt from the rattan.

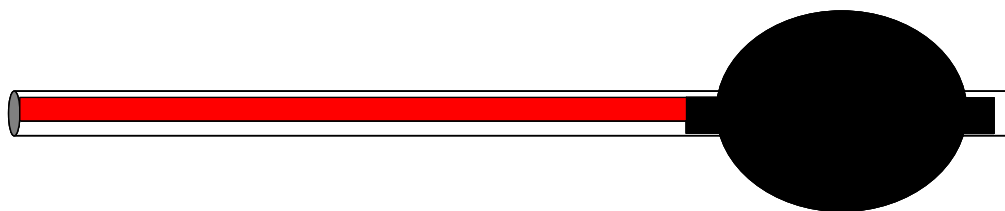


Fig 2 Sword with Basket hilt attached.

The next stage was to mark the sword's front and back edge with my sharpie (Fig 1). Remember the notch from the back edge of the blade now it was time to either draw that edge all the way up to the top of the rattan, **OR** tape the edge with electrical tape to designate the area you **DO NOT** want to plane down. My suggestion is to mark it rather than tape it because the tape can come off while removing wood but I have no real preference and sometimes use the electrical tape to get a straight edge before making it with my sharpie. But either way, or a combination of ways, is fine as long as you don't plane the sword edges down. Why? The rattan skin provides a strong coat to the interior fiber, if it is removed then the blade will pulp or broom easier than if it is not removed. So I leave the rattan skin on so that I have the extra strength along the blade's edge where it is more likely to come into repeated contact with an opponent's shield, blade, or body thereby weakening it. In other words with the skin it's less likely to break or pulp, and has a longer life span.

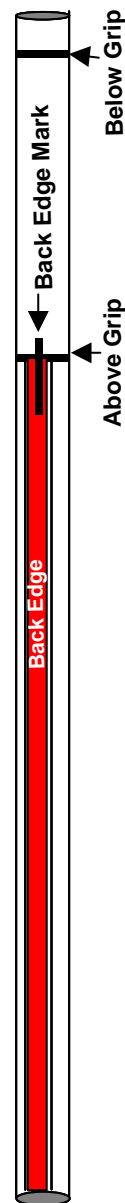


Fig. 1 Sword Hilt Markings

You've marked your handle placement; your edge and now you are ready to plane your stick down. I begin with the blade using a draw blade, or if you have access to one, a table saw or table planer. In the case of the table planer or saws you set your width marker for 1 1/4 inch, block off your wood, put your safety glasses on, turn on the machine and gently push your stick through to the point that you want it. Then turn the machine off, wait for the blade to stop moving and remove your wood. There you have it, a nice planed down bit of rattan. I however don't get access to this type of machinery often, so I end up sitting in front of the TV removing wood and checking the width of my edge after every second draw of the blade. What I'm working towards is a blade with the sides planed down and a handle with the front edge and sides carved down until it fits my hand. I usually take the skin off the back edge and nothing more until I get a handle that looks like Fig. 3.



Fig. 3 Sword Handle shape and edges of the blade as they appear after being worked to the grip

After planing and sanding the rattan swords flat edge and handle to look something like the above image, I dull the tip of the sword with a utility knife so that there were no sharp corners, filed it down a bit so the corners were smooth and rounded, and then focus on preparing the blade. This part consists of spiral taping the blade with string-embedded packing tape, then running a strip of 1 inch wide acrylic webbing base-over top-to base and taping in place with a couple of strips of duct tape to keep in place. Then when the webbing is secure, run strips of red duct tape up and down the blade to secure the webbing, protect the edge of the blade, and hide the ugly clear strapping tape so that it is well and truly covered. I suggest only 1 layer of duct tape as the blade can get heavy the more layers you add.

After the blade is prepared I test swing the blade to check that the added tape and acrylic webbing haven't added too much weight. I then move on to the handle. First I wrap the carved out handle in grip tape so that sweat and fatigue during fighting don't allow me to release my sword into the crowd during a tournament. The grip is sticky and allows me to keep hold no matter the exhaustion level or moisture on my palm. Then I place my Boulder Cup basket hilt on the blade in the pre-marked position tape it down and circle the top and bottom of the basket where the tangs are with large hose clamps acquired at any convenience store or 7-11. I tighten them until there is no movement and they were securely locked in place. Tested the swing and weight again. Then removed the basket hilt and set a trigger grip of rolled up duct tape against the base of where I was going to have the basket hilt meet the handle grip. I set the basket hilt back in place tightened the clamps securely again and gave the whole set up another test swing. When I'm satisfied with the way the basket hilt is attached to the rattan, I cut the excess end off the base of the sword under the basket hilt and secure the metal clamps binding it to the rattan. A small trick for keeping the hose clamps from breaking is to put a small rectangle of suede or leather over the tail end of the clamp that is left exposed and used duct tape to secure the end so that it is forced to lay flat against my stick, Then wrap several layers of duct tape around the hose clamps to keep everything firmly secured to the stick. Lastly, I filed off the ends to the tip and base of my sword so that it is an exact duplicate of my tip and run a security layer of tape around the edge. Now I have the perfect sword.

# Service

## *Letter's of Intent*

### *From the Seneschal*

Greetings Pontoons,

As we have had almost 4 wonderful years with our Baron & Baroness, Marcellus & Belphoebe, it is time for the candidates for our next Baronage to introduce themselves to you.

Below you will find letters from the four candidate sets: Luce & Miles, Millicent, Jurgen & Flora, and Robert & Wulfwyn. These letters will appear in the August and September newsletters and then in mid-September (about the 20th) a polling letter will be sent to the homes of those paid members who live within the zip code boundaries of Ponte Alto. The instructions will be included within the letter along with an envelope to return to our Monarchs.

If you do not live within the boundaries, you may send your comments about the candidates to Prince Logan and Princess Rowan at [trh@atlantia.sca.org](mailto:trh@atlantia.sca.org) and after the upcoming September Coronation they can be reached [trm@atlantia.sca.org](mailto:trm@atlantia.sca.org).

As usual, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 571-239-2183 or [seneschal@pontealto.atlantia.sca.org](mailto:seneschal@pontealto.atlantia.sca.org).

In Service,

Katharine

THL Katharine Devereaux

Barony of Ponte Alto

Baronial Seneschal

Unto the Populace of the Barony of Ponte Alto do we send greeting from Robert of Calais and Wulfwyn AElf wines dohtor.

By this letter, we hereby offer our intent for nomination as candidates for Baron and Baroness. We are both humbled and honored by this, and pledge ourselves to support and uphold the standards of the Crown, the Barony, the Kingdom of Atlantia, and the Society as a whole.

We want to give our love to the outgoing Baron and Baroness, Marcellus and Belphoebe. We wish them the best in all their efforts and fervently wish they could remain as Baron and Baroness for life. That being said, we acknowledge that changes happen and promise to continue with their vision for the Barony, as well as add our own, and to promote the deeds, dreams and talents of Ponte Alto.

Our goal is not to allow the efforts of Ponte Alto artisans, fighters, and services, be obscured. You can help! Where one of our own is mentioned on an order list, be supportive. Make sure the readers of the list know who this person is, what good they have done and are doing. Ultimately we would like every fighter, every artisan and every services person to know that the entire Barony supports them. We can't be all things to all people but we can be a big happy family.

Thanks to the outgoing Baron and Baroness Marcellus and Belphoebe, we would be bequeathed a Barony with no great troubles. We have no axes to grind, no great wrongs to right, we just want to promote a greater sense of community in Ponte Alto. Where we can, let us help each other out, on the field, and off the field. Although we would be the more visible representatives, we feel that the populace is the real representatives of the Barony. You are the true heart and soul, and we are there to stand for you in all matters.

Robert of Calais

Wulfwyn AElf wines dohtor

Greetings unto the noble populace of the Barony of Ponte Alto from Miles de Locwode and Luce Antony Venus:

With this letter we accept the nomination as candidates for Baron and Baroness of Ponte Alto, to succeed Marcellus and Belpheobe. First, let us say we are honored by your belief in our worthiness for nomination. We feel it most productive to discuss our candidacy in terms of what we believe the job of being your Baron and Baroness entails, what our vision is of what the Barony is and can be.

We believe that the heart of this job is to be an ambassador for Ponte Alto. First and foremost, by being the Crown's representative in the Barony. This means building Ponte Alto as a thriving, productive group that supports Atlantia in all her endeavors. But it also means being the advocate of Ponte Alto's populace to the Crown – assuring that individuals are properly recognized and represented in all things. It also means being visible to the rest of Atlantia, bearing witness throughout the Kingdom of the wonderful things that Ponte Alto's populace does.

We believe that the soul of this job is to create an environment in this Barony that is engaging, welcoming and fun. A Baron and Baroness should encourage the populace to aspire to great things, honor their efforts, and applaud their successes. Ponte Alto has developed a tradition that “everyone has a seat at the table,” meaning that all people are welcome, and all ideas deserve fair consideration. It is the job of the Baron and Baroness to promote and protect this tradition, as well as all the traditions of the Barony.

As for specific goals as Baron and Baroness, we want to continue to support the efforts of our Warlords by increasing the numbers of our Baronial army at Pennsic by 25% over previous years, and honoring every fighter who fights under a baronial tabard in any martial activity at any Inter-Kingdom war with a token of our esteem. We also hope to have the Barony host at least one Kingdom-level event during our term. Lastly, in order to support both the arts and Baronial unity, we intend to host a monthly open house in our home to provide a regular, informal forum to take on A&S projects, performer's circles, or any other endeavor we as a group decide is worthy.

For those of you who do not know us personally, rather than recite awards, we offer our record of service to the Barony. Miles has served as Baronial Seneschal, Baronial Archery Marshal, and Baronial Archery Champion. Luce has served as Baronial Deputy Chatelaine, Baronial Chatelaine, Baronial Artisan and Baronial Bard. Both of us have served as autocrat at Baronial events and are involved in the Baronial Pennsic encampment. Being Baron and Baroness is about more than having a title or coronet – it is a commitment to selfless service of the Barony and its populace. We see these roles as an extension of our service to the Barony. As required by and consistent with the Baronial Charter and as modified by Kingdom Law, we agree to the provisions for term of office and selection of successors and pledge to maintain those provisions.

Despite all the things that a Baron and Baroness may promise they will do, the fact remains that they achieve nothing without the populace. Listening to the thoughts, aspirations, concerns, dreams, and ideas of the populace is of great importance to us, both now as candidates, and in the future if we are graced with the honor of serving you. Please feel free to approach us with any questions or ideas you have.

Ponte Alto has such a tradition of excellence, and such a capable populace, we believe strongly that no matter who serves as the next Baronage, Ponte Alto will grow and thrive. It would be our honor to serve both the Crown and you in this capacity. Many thanks for your consideration. In Service to Atlantia and the Dream we remain,

THL Miles de Locwode

THL Luce Antony Venus

To the gracious populace of the Barony of Ponte Alto:

I joyfully accept the nomination for the office of Baroness of Ponte Alto, and thank you for your trust in my abilities to represent this outstanding Barony.

The Barony of Ponte Alto is my SCA home. My residence may lie outside of the physical boundaries of the Barony but my heart has always been drawn to Ponte Alto and her people. For nearly four years I have served as Ponte Alto's Chamberlain and Chancellor of the Exchequer, tending the finances and possessions of this Barony. I have represented Ponte Alto at arts and science festivals and displays as both Baronial Bard and Baronial Artisan. For a short period of time I was a deputy Chatelaine and am currently a deputy Minister of Arts and Sciences. I have dabbled in rapier fighting, combat archery and target archery and will become more active in these disciplines and join the Ponte Alto troops as my gear and skills improve.

I view the office of Baroness as a hostess for the Barony. She should make all comers -- from the newest attendees to those who were present for the First Tournament -- feel welcome and at home. She should be poised and fair under trying situations. She should assist in finding those niches in which members' talents may flourish and ensure that no one goes unrecognized, both on a local level and in Their Majesties' eyes. She should also provide troops and support for when Their Majesties sound the trumpets for battle.

I will do all of these things and much more should you express your confidence to Their Majesties in allowing me to serve as your Baroness.

In service,

Lady Millicent Chandler

Dear good gentry of Ponte Alto,

I would like to recommend Lady Flora deBayeaux for your consideration in this baronial polling. Flora has actively participated in our society for three years. In that time, she has learned much about archery, A&S, and service. Flora is friendly and outgoing, but more to the point, she has actively worked to bring new people into our Barony. She is always friendly and helpful. As Baroness, Flora would remain focused on helping newcomers integrate into our society.

One of the most important and often overlooked things is this small secret: The SCA is fun. Flora loves Ponte Alto and the SCA because it's fun. As baroness, she would be able to share her love for the SCA with both newcomers and old-timers alike. Flora is diplomatic, and knows how to help others stay focused on what matters, encouraging people to enjoy SCA participation.

Yours in Service,

Lord Jurgen Göttsfürböter

Good Gentles of Ponte Alto,

Lord Jurgen Gottsfurboter, in my opinion, already acts in a Baronial manner. He is a very active member of the fighting community. While in the Kingdom of the West he was inducted into Order of the Rose Leaf (for expertise in the arts or sciences) and The Order of the Leaf of Merit (for service.) While in Atlantia he has already earned the Onore del Ponte d'Argento and Onore del Ponte di Ferro for serving as the Baronial Heavy Arms Champion. His weaving has had the distinguished honor of winning the Tempore Atlantia. He regularly invites people into his home to work on armoring, weaving, sewing and best of all, sampling his home brew!

When he is not teaching people skills he has learned, he is helping the barony in others ways. He still has the desire to implement practice "tournaments". His mind is overflowing with ideas to keep Ponte Alto the best barony in Atlantia.

So whether or not Lord Jurgen is elected Baron, it does not change the fact that he is a leader and an inspiration to Pontoons. I am proud to be his Lady.

Lady Flora de Bayeaux

# Trivia

## Medieval Trivia

Under command of King Alaric, the Visigoths besieged Rome when negotiations with the empire for land and supplies broke down. On August 24, 410 allies of Alaric within the city opened the gates, and the Visigoths plundered the capital for three days. They treated the inhabitants humanely, burning few buildings, but nevertheless the incident was shocking, for it had been almost 800 years since a foreign force had occupied Rome. This incident is sometimes regarded as the beginning of the Middle Ages.

(Merry Rose, Beth Roberts)

## SCA Trivia

Each of these questions is worth 1 pt. unless otherwise specified to the contrary. Winners of the Trivia contest will be published in next months issue along with the answers. (Possible 19 pts) Send you answers to mariatheresapontoon@yahoo.com for publication in next months Il Tempo.

1. Who are the four candidates running for Baronial Positions? (4 pt.)
2. Who was the first recipient of the Coral Branch? (1 pt.)
3. How many Majesties have sat the Atlantian Thrown? (2 pt.)
4. How months in the spring reign of a King and Queen? (1 pt.)
5. Name two Peerages. (1 pt.)
6. Who are all the Major offices and the officers of Ponte Alto? (5 pt.)
7. Who are two Deputy officers and their positions in Ponte Alto? (2 pt.)
8. Who are our next King and Queen? (1 pt)
9. Name a Ponte Alto Peer. (1 pt.)
10. How many Silver Osprey does Ponte Alto have as of August 1, 2007? (1 pt.)