

# Ælfræmo

Newsletter of the Barony of Ponte Alto-Volume 17, Issue 10<sup>Q</sup> November 2008

Barony of Ponte Alto, November 2008, Chronicler\* Lady Wulfwyn Ælfwines dothor



Calendar, November: a man knocking acorns out of oak-trees, Master of Jean Rolin II(illuminator).  
In the Hague

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# From the Chronicle...

*November – where did October go? Soon it will be December and then another new year. Frightening how fast the months go by sometimes. Lots of news, so here goes...*

*First of all, we want to welcome our new Prince and Princess, Logan Ebonwoulfe and Esa Kirkepatricke. Congratulations on your win at Fall Crown Tournament.*

*We are sad to announce, if you don't already know, that our Baron and Baroness, Jurgen and Flora, have decided to step down. The polling for the new Baron and Baroness should be in your mailbox by now. Please make sure you complete and send in your ballots to Their Majesties as soon as possible. Polling must be received by Their Majesties no later than December 5th. The Investiture will be held at 12<sup>th</sup> Night.*

*We have a few local events coming up in the next couple of months to be aware of. First is War of the Roses in Dun Carraig on the 15<sup>th</sup>, just a short drive to Waldorf, Maryland. Holiday Faire is happening in neighboring Stierbach right down the road at the Prince William Fairgrounds on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. It's a great time to come out and get some great bargains on new and used garb, A&S supplies, jewelry, weapons, you name it. A good place to look for those hard to find Holiday gifts, as well, lots of merchants from all over the Kingdom will be there to tempt you – and your wallet!*

*Unevent will be held in Caer Mear on December 6<sup>th</sup>. This is a non-garb event and all officers, both Kingdom and local, are urged to attend as well as members of Kingdom Orders, marshals, scribes and heralds, although anyone is welcome to attend. There will be meetings, policy changes and reviews as well as Curia will be held. Please see the event flyer posted on the Kingdom website for more information. A luncheon will be available for purchase, and there is no charge for this event.*

*December also brings Ponte Alto's Winter's Welcome Revel on the 13<sup>th</sup>, to be held at the Falls Church Presbyterian Church. Come celebrate with games, music and dance. An afternoon feast will also be served. Get your reservations now.*

*You still have time to make some special and exceptional garb for 12<sup>th</sup> Night. The Canton of Sudentorre will host this year in Stafford and early reservations are a must for this event if you want to stay for the feast. See the Kingdom website for all the information.*

*Have you noticed all the new babies in the Barony? Lots of new additions as well as more little Pontoons on the way. And I'd like to personally congratulate our own Sir Thomas of Calais and his lovely wife Countess Denise Duvalier on the adoption of little Thomas Paul Hundley III, AKA "Trey", born November 5<sup>th</sup>. Although Ansteorran born, he's Atlantian through and through.*

*Whew! Well that about covers the news for the next two months. There are other events November and December all over Atlantia, so make sure you check the Kingdom website for the entire list.*

*See you at Holiday Faire!*

*Lady Wulfwyn Ælfwines dohtor  
Chronicler, Barony of Ponte Alto*

Greetings citizens of Ponte Alto!

Here are the list of candidates for the baronial polling:

Lady Delphina the Mad

Lord Brenainn MacShuibne & Lady Kat of Ponte Alto

Lord Connor Sinclair & Lady Courtney of Houghton

Baroness Celia of Rosedale

Baron James de Biblesworth & Lady Katharine Devereaux

Lord Drogo Rainulf de Drogonera & Lady Adina von der Heide

The polling should be in the mailboxes of all the current paid members as of Nov. 1st by the end of next week. If you do not receive a polling, you can e-mail their royal majesties with your comments. The polling must be to Their Majesties no later than December 5<sup>th</sup>.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me via e-mail or phone.

Regards,

Gustav von Silberwald

VA Regional Seneschal

Unto the populace of the Barony of Ponte Alto do Lord Brenainn MacShuibne and Lady Kat of Ponte Alto send greetings!

As we humbly accept the nomination to the polling for Baron and Baroness, we wish first of all to thank Baroness Flora and Baron Jurgen for their past year of service in these offices. It is by their example that we have learned the great responsibility which these positions require, and it is they who have inspired us to seek a more active role in service to our Barony. To that end, we would like to share with you our beliefs and goals in regards to Ponte Alto and the positions of Baron and Baroness.

We believe that the true strength of Ponte Alto rests within the people who call the Barony home. To that end, we would seek to support and to honor all the groups that comprise the populace, whether they be our distinguished fighting units, those who combine their efforts towards excellence in the Arts and Sciences, those who continually give of themselves in service to the Barony and to Atlantia, and the countless others who make Ponte Alto great.

As Baron and Baroness, we would actively recruit new members. We would strive to build on Ponte Alto's martial capabilities and continue to be a shining beacon of the Northern Army of Atlantia. We would seek to foster a greater sense of community by encouraging our fellows to participate in the full variety of activities Ponte Alto has to offer. We seek to accomplish these goals through personal example and by ensuring that everyone, especially each newcomer, is aware of the full range of possibilities available to them within the Society. As Ponte Alto continues to grow in number and in achievement, we wish to build on the great legacy of those Barons and Baronesses that have come before.

While we may not have as much experience within the Barony as others, this does not diminish our willingness and enthusiasm if called upon to serve. We will strive to keep the barony a fun and dynamic place for those who live here, and for those who attend our events.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

Yours in Service,  
Brenainn and Kat

Greetings unto The populace of the Barony of Ponte Alto, from Baroness Celia of Rosedale. May this missive find all of you content and well, enjoying the bounties of the harvest.

First I wish to thank the Barony for the honor of allowing me to be considered as a candidate for the next Baron/Baroness of Ponte Alto. I have been a member of the SCA and Barony for over 14 years and am proud to call myself an Atlantian Pontoon. I would be proud serve as Ponte Alto's representative to Atlantia in these lands.

I have enjoyed serving the barony and kingdom in many capacities over the years including deputy and then Baronial Minister of Arts & Science, and deputy exchequer. As many may know I am currently the Exchequer for Ponte Alto as well as the Deputy KMOAS for performing arts. I have served Ponte Alto as an autocrat. I also have a great love of performing arts especially music and I am active in many of the kingdom's performance arts activities. I was Ponte Alto's first Baronial Bard. I have also been known to pick up Bow and Arrow on occasions in defense of the Barony. I have served the fighting community as an MOL at large for the past 2 years. Further, I have also been honored to serve as retainer for the reigns of Stephan and Niobe, Jonas and Rachel, Robert and Denise, and Valharic and Arielle.

I believe I have the experience and diplomatic skills to serve the Barony and Atlantia well as Ponte Alto's Baroness. I recognize and embrace the diversity Ponte Alto has to offer in all its citizens. From my service to prior Monarchs of this Kingdom, I believe I have an understanding of the joys and challenges of managing a Court, and the burden of travel needed to best represent the Barony and her people to the kingdom; Having been active in Ponte Alto for so long, I understand much of our history, people and traditions

I believe one of the most important roles of the Baronage is to recognize and support the goals of the populace. As such, I would:

- Promote the Barony's wish of developing bids worthy of hosting Kingdom level events. I sincerely believe Ponte Alto has a vast source of Service and Talent to host events that comfortably welcome the Kingdom's populace to these lands and exemplifies the glory of Our Barony to Atlantia.
- Encourage the establishment of regular A&S activities and gatherings that would appeal to the diverse interests within the group.
- Support the fighting community in their efforts for recruitment and training. As a non-combatant I feel it is crucial that the Fighting community knows their Baroness supports their efforts of being a fighting unit that makes the Kingdom strong and intimidates our enemies.
- To help the newcomers on their journey into our Society. I feel everyone has a vision of what The Dream means to them. I feel as Baroness it is most important to assist those new to our society find the niche that best meets their vision of The Dream

I wish to note that should I be Chosen the next Baroness, I would not leave my current jobs in need, for I have deputies and other candidates who are prepared to take a next step on their journey.

I thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Baroness Celia of Rosedale



To the gracious populace of the Barony of Ponte Alto:

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

Connor and I have both been members of the SCA for many years, 16 and 12 years respectively. In our own ways, Connor with martial activities (both heavy and rapier) as well as Arts and Sciences, and myself through service in various Baronial and a Kingdom level office, we have both happily served the Barony and the Kingdom for many years, and hope to do so for many more to come.

On the Baronial level, Connor has held many offices including Knight Marshal, Herald, and has been called upon to be the Rapier Champion as well as the Warlord for Their Excellencies in previous years. I have held the Webminister and Chronicler offices. We have both been honored to be inducted into the Order of the Garland, Ponte Alto's highest level of recognition.

We feel that the Baron and Baroness are the ambassadors for the Barony, and as such would also be a real life host and hostess for all comers to our events and our area. We would revive the fine tradition of "Baronial at Home" nights and open our house on a regular basis to everyone for a night of fellowship and arts & sciences pursuits. In addition, we would assist in finding niches in which members' talents may flourish and ensure that no one goes unrecognized, both on a local level and in Their Majesties' eyes. We would also provide troops and support for when Their Majesties sound the trumpets for battle.

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

In service,

Lady Courtney de Houghton and Lord Connor Sinclair

Greetings unto their Majesties of Atlantia,

I am submitting this letter for the intent to run for Baroness of Ponte Alto. My SCA name is Lady Delphina the Mad. My mundane name is Charlene Ratliff. I have been an active member of the SCA since 1998. During that time I have been an authorized fencer, a combat archer, and one of the first three authorized Siege Engineers in the Kingdom of Atlantia. I have held the office of Baronial MOL for Ponte Alto for the past three years. Before holding this office I was a deputy A&S officer for one year. I also have a broad range of experience in all areas of the SCA. I have participated in battles at Pennsic, I have worked troll at Pennsic, I have participated in A&S activities and I have been an autocrat.

Per your Majesties' request I am listing the following awards I have received while in the SCA:

- 1) Award of Arms (Atlantia, 6/12/2004)
- 2) Ponte d'Oro (Ponte Alto service award, 9/18/2004)
- 3) Opal (01/07/2006)
- 4) Undine (04/01/2006)
- 5) Queen's Order of Courtesy (Atlantia, 04/01/2006)
- 6) Coral Branch (03/03/2007)
- 7) Order of the Garland (Ponte Alto's highest order, 12/15/2007)

I believe if given the opportunity, I will do a great job as Baroness. I am familiar with what the job entails. I was a retainer for the former Baron and Baroness of Ponte Alto, Baron Marcellus Capozziello da Napoli, and Mistress Belpheobe de Givet during their four year tenure. I learned much of what it takes to be landed baronage during this time. I was also a royal retainer for two reigns for Atlantian Monarchs. I actually stepped up to be the head retainer half way through the second reign when the former head retainer needed to step down. I believe due to my experience, I have a good working knowledge on what a position such as Baroness requires of me in regards to supporting and representing my barony and in regards to the Crowns of Atlantia.

I love my barony and I have a vision for what direction I want to take it in during my tenure if selected as Baroness. I want to foster a feeling of family, and a sense of welcoming to visitors and the rest of the Kingdom. I will encourage more opportunities for social activities such as picnics at the weekend fighter practices. I want to encourage familiarity within the populace by encouraging them to get to know other aspects of what the SCA offers. I want individuals to try things they might not have tried before. I want

people to "know how the other half play in the SCA," as it were. Finally, one of my biggest goals is that I want to encourage more participation in the service areas, not just on a baronial level but also on a kingdom level. I plan to issue Baroness's challenges that will be fun and beneficial to the populace in order to encourage voluntary participation.

I believe I am at a good place in my life currently that would allow me to be a good Baroness for the barony. I work mundanely with the government full time. My job keeps me brushed up on my diplomatic and leadership skills. I also currently have no other commitments in my life that would interfere with my role as Baroness so I could therefore concentrate fully on the responsibility should I be chosen.

In closing, I hope you will accept my nomination. I am running alone without a partner but I believe my love and concern for the welfare of my Barony will give me the strength I will need to accomplish this job. I also have made many friends and acquaintances in the barony that will also support me if selected.

-YiS,

Lady Delphina the Mad

(Charlene Ratliff)

Greetings unto the good Citizens of Ponte Alto,

If we are fortunate enough to be selected to serve the Barony we will do our best to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to enjoy the Barony and all it has to offer and are recognized for their contributions, skill and support.

It is our intention to fully support the continued growth and well being of the arts and sciences, ensure the Known World is envious of the Barony's beautiful singing and dancing, and promote service to the Barony and Kingdom. We will also work with the fencing and heavy weapons groups to be the best in the Kingdom and promote archery and thrown weapons while ensuring fun for all. Creating a group of combat archers to rival those from our neighbors to the north and reviving the Baronial siege weapons groups will be another of our goals.

We will do our best to ensure that everyone continues to feel welcome in Ponte Alto and that all are able to have a good time.

In service to the Barony,

Lord Drogo Rainulf deDragonera

Lady Adina von der Heide

Greetings to the Barony of Ponte Alto:

We, James de Biblesworth and Katharine Devereaux, wish to serve the Barony of Ponte Alto as your Baron and Baroness.

This Barony provides strength and presence throughout this fair Kingdom of Atlantia. If we are granted the opportunity to serve as your Baron and Baroness, we have the following goals for this Barony:

- 1) To continue and improve on the Ponte Alto traditions
- 2) Provide a strong presence both locally and kingdom wide
- 3) Strengthen our individuals and in turn, improve our Barony as a whole
- 4) Help everyone find their own way to participate in this game we call the SCA
- 5) Increase the size and strength of the Ponte Alto Army – Heavy, Rapier & Archery

To accomplish the above goals, we promise you that we will work with the people of Ponte Alto, its officers and guilds, and the rest of the groups in this wonderful kingdom of Atlantia.

In Service,

James de Biblesworth and Katharine Devereaux

# Baronial Officers

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## **Deputy Knight Marshal**

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*Members of the Baronial Guard*

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Mistress Cunen Beornhelm (Captain)

*Baronial Noteables*

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# Baronial Meeting Minutes

## Business Meeting Minutes – October 26<sup>th</sup> Start Time 6:00

### Seneschal

Thank you everyone for coming. If you are interested in becoming a deputy officer, please see Katharine, it's perfectly fine to have more than one deputy for a position.

### Exchequer

Currently at our account, we have \$13,175.79. Quarterly report is done and will be sent soon.

There was a net worth change to the positive of \$1,542.00, this includes storage fees and other items paid. There was a change to the Chalice profit making it \$2,420.00

### Heavy Marshal

Quarterly report has been sent in.

### Rapier Marshal

Practice continues; several new comers have been showing interest.

### Archery Marshal

Practice continues. Monday practice is in Stierbach; see the Weekly Activity page for directions and more information. Indoor practice will be starting at Bull Run soon, probably on Fridays. More information to follow.

### A&S

Not present

### Chatelaine

A few new people have shown interest. Information for the next Newcomers Meeting will be posted to the list.

### Herald

Nothing new at this time. Quarterly report complete and has been sent in.

### MoL

Nothing new at this time.

### Chronicler

It's been a quiet month. Chronicler will be stepping down in February and either Brenainn or Alan will be stepping up. Please send in your articles, photos, stories and any other information you'd like to see published. We don't have a newsletter without you!

### Minister of Minors - Not Present

### Webminister

Nothing new at this time. Please send any changes for information to the Webmaster.

### Heavy Champion - Not Present

### Rapier Champion - Not Present

### Baron and Baroness

Both have decided to step down. A new polling will be conducted to vote on candidates. The new Baron and

Baroness will have an investiture at 12<sup>th</sup> Night in January. See the New Business section for further information.

**Baronial Warlord** – not present

**Baronial Artisan** – not present

## EVENTS

**Winter Revel** – Nothing new at this time. A signup sheet will come out at the December meeting for volunteers for set up, clean up, troll, children's corner, etc. This site will open at 9:00 for set up and at 10:00 for event. There will be performances & tournaments until around 1:00 or so, court will begin at 1:30 and feast at 2:00. Event ends at 6:00 and site closes at 7:00. There will be a silent auction and if you have anything you would like to donate, please contact Lady Katharine.

Please send your reservation in as soon as possible.

**Tournament of Love & Beauty** – The event has been Spiked and we still need volunteers for the event. A cleanup crew is very important as last year the main people that stayed were from another barony. Please contact Autocrat, Lady Wulfwyn, if you are interested in helping.

**St. Paddy's Day Bloodbath** – See New Business Section for information.

**Sapphire/Pennsic** – Will need landocrats.

**Chalice of the Sun God** – Theme will be "Twins", further information to follow

## OLD BUSINESS

**New Coronets** - Further information to follow soon.

**Cooks Guild** – Quite a few items have been purchased for the Guild, but more will be needed.

## NEW BUSINESS

**Awards** – The Baron proposed the origination of a Children's Award for Courtesy for those under 13. We will need to work on a name and device for the award. Would like to form a committee to research; voted and approved, Denise and Cassandra volunteered.

**Baronial Candidates** – Baronial policy states candidates must have letter of intent to TRM's, both in writing & e-mail. The following candidates were nominated: Lady Delphina the Mad, Lord Brenainn MacShuibne and Lady Kat of Ponte Alto, Baroness Celia of Rosedale, Lord Drogo Rainulf de Drogonere & Aida von der Heide, Baron James de Biblesworth & Lady Katharine Deveraux, Lord Connor Sinclair & Lady Courtney de Houghton, all accepted their nominations. Information on polling will appear in the November issue of Il Tempo. Regular Kingdom policy of a forward time period of 4 months has been waived per His Majesty due to the short time frame.

**Alle Psallite** has been moved to Tuesday nights, would like to see more people involved.

**Sunday Heavy Practice** moved inside at Lemon road Elementary School, will also continue A&S at site.

**St. Luke's Artisans' Fair** has several Pontoon's participating and gave a good showing. It was a wonderful event.

**St. Paddy's Day Bloodbath** - A discussion as to whether to keep this as either regular fighting event or a demo, a mini-faire, artisans fair, etc. This would be an opportunity for the public to interact and also as a recruiting possibility. Could this be a fundraiser perhaps. Would need many people to answer questions, man the fences, for crowd control, etc. It would also be a way to show the public what we do. Do we want to continue this as a fighting event, or as a show the public? Would we like to set up a recruiting booth with information, flyers, contacts, etc? Perhaps present as a demo such as we give at schools.

Discussion was tabled after a lengthy discussion and will continue at a later time.

Meeting ended

34 attendees

# Monthly Calendar

November 2008

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
					1	2 12-6 pm Outdoor Heavy Weapons Practice
3 4:30 pm Archery Practice	4 7:30 pm Alle Psallite 7 pm Scriptorium	5	6 6 pm Heavy Weapons Practice 6 pm Rapier Practice	7 Fall Crown 2008	8 Fall Crown 2008	9 Fall Crown 2008 1-5 pm Outdoor Heavy Weapons Practice
10 4:30 pm Archery Practice	11 7:30 pm Alle Psallite	12	13 6 pm Heavy Weapons Practice 6 pm Rapier Practice	14	15 War of the Roses – Dun carraig's Baronial Birthday Marinus Baronial Birthday	16 1-5 pm Indoor Heavy Weapons Practice 3-4:30 pm Dance Practice
17 4:30 pm Archery Practice	18 7:30 pm Alle Psallite	19	20 6 pm Heavy Weapons Practice 6 pm Rapier Practice	21 7 pm Cooks Guild Meeting	22 Holiday Faire	23 1-5 pm Indoor Heavy Weapons Practice
24 4:30 pm Archery Practice	25 7:30 pm Alle Psallite	26	27 Thanksgiving	28	29	30 1-5 pm Indoor Heavy Weapons Practice

\* = Baronial Progress

# Events

## Baronial Progress for November 2008

Date	Event
November 15	Dun Carraig Baronial Birthday
November 22	Holiday Faire

## November 2008 Calendar of Scheduled Events

Date	Event	Group	Location
7-9	Fall Crown	Sacred Stone	Reidsville, NC
15	War of the Wings III	Dun Carraig	Waldorf, MD
15	Marinus Baronial Birthday	Marinus	Virginia Beach, VA
22	Holiday Faire	Stierbach	Manassas, VA

# Weekly Activities

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 Idylwood 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 Idylwood Rd. The church is up the hill on the right about 1/4 mile.
<b>Sunday Social –</b> - <b>Heavy Weapons Practice</b> - <b>Arts/Sciences</b>	Lemon Road Elementary: Indoor Winter Practices for Heavy Weapons, Rapier, and an area for A&S activities are all included. Come and join the gathering and bring whatever you're working on. This is a great time to meet & socialize with other people in the barony. Activities held at Lemon Road Elementary School on Idylwood Road, 1pm-4pm. Contact the Baronial Knight Marshal for more information. Indoor Heavy Directions. This is a school location activity.  <u>From Southern Virginia, Maryland and Alexandria, VA</u> Take I-495 (the beltway) to the VA-Route 7 East exit at Tysons Corner labeled Leesburg Pike/Falls Church, Exit #47B. Continue on Leesburg Pike towards Falls Church for 1.2M. Turn left onto Idylwood Road for 0.3 miles. * Turn left into the Lemon Road Elementary School front parking lot.. <u>From Northwestern Virginia and Washington, DC</u> Take I-66 to the VA-Route 7 West exit for Leesburg Pike/Tysons Corner exit #66B. Continue on Leesburg Pike under 0.1M towards Tysons Corner. Turn right at the first light onto Idylwood Road for 0.3 miles. Follow from * above.
MONDAY	
<b>Alle Psallite (Vocal Music)</b>	Every Tuesday, 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.
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 Shrevevood 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.
FRIDAY	
<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. 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.  November's meeting will be at the home of Lord Connor Sinclair & Lady Courtney de Houghton in Reston, VA. Please contact our Chatelaine for more information.  This month we will discuss Camping Events, expectations and what you need to have with you.

**\* 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>

**Special Thursday Night parking instructions at:** We have received some complaints about lack of parking spaces from residents of the Peachtree of McClean apartment complex which adjoins our practice site. After some informal negotiations we have arrived at an agreement with the building management. We beseech those attending Thursday night practices to adhere to the following procedures from now on:

*You may unload your gear from parking spaces adjoining our practice area. But then please move your car to another space either at least a block further away from Route 7 in the complex parking lot or in the library parking lot closer to Route 7. At the conclusion of practice you may once again move your car to a space adjoining the practice area in order to reload your gear before exiting the site. In this way we hope to be able to continue to use the parking facilities of the complex without inconveniencing the residents.*

# the Real Middle-Ages

## Medieval Theater

### What is it and what it was about...

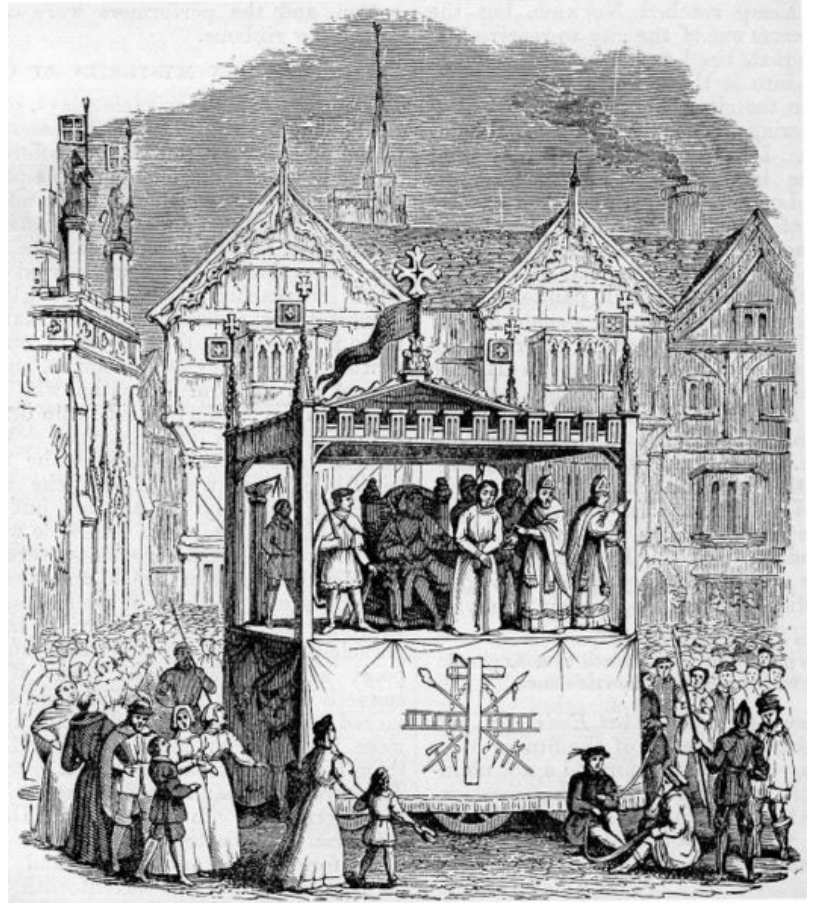
Medieval theatre refers to the theatre of Europe between the fall of the Western Empire and the beginning of the Renaissance. The term refers to a variety of genres because the time period covers approximately a thousand years of the art form and an entire continent. Most medieval theatre is not well documented due to a lack of surviving records and texts, a low literacy rate of the general population, and the opposition of the clergy to some types of performance.

At the beginning of the Middle Ages, the Roman Catholic Church banned theatrical performances, mostly as an attempt to curb the excesses of the Roman Theatre. The Roman theatre was in decline because the economic and political conditions could not support the vast entertainment industry that had grown up in the empire and included circuses, horse races, gladiatorial combat, and the Roman comedies that are still sometimes performed today.

Very little is known about secular drama during the early medieval time. There certainly existed some performances that were not fully fledged theatre; they may have been carryovers from the original pagan cultures as is known from records written by the clergy disapproving of such festivals. It is also known that mimes, minstrels, bards, storytellers, and jugglers traveled in search of new audiences and financial support. Not much is known about these performers' repertoire and no written texts survive.

In order to understand medieval theatre, the context of which it was performed is an important aspect to be known. Superstitions stood to be important - witches were believed to be alive and practicing their witchcraft. God was highly praised. The religious aspect of medieval life is reflected in the didactic theatre presented at the time. They were used to inform audiences about religion.

In the tenth century the liturgical was born in the *Quem Quaeritis?* This is based on the story from the New Testament in which Mary Magdalene and her companions discover Christ's empty tomb and was performed in the church or cathedral at Easter time. Eventually liturgical drama would encompass many stories from many parts of the Bible and be performed at diverse times of the year, according to local custom.



By about 1250, however, the plays would move outdoors into the churchyard and into open fields, town squares, or the city streets. As geographically further from the church, the clergy had less control over the content. The plays were also presented in the local vernacular languages, instead of in Latin, as was the mass. This allowed the message of the Bible to be more accessible to the illiterate audience--who wanted to have it but who were also unable to speak Latin--but also accelerated the gain of control over religious drama that the laymen would exercise.

These new plays in the vernacular based on Bible stories are called mystery plays. In England they would sometimes be performed in day-long festivals in groups of dozens of plays that traveled through town on wagons. Mystery plays were also written about the lives and miracles of saints, especially the Virgin Mary. Mystery plays would be performed into the Renaissance through the Protestant Reformation in northern Europe or the seventeenth century in southern and rural Europe.

By the late medieval period several genres had developed in theatre. Morality plays, such as *Everyman*, personified Christian virtues and vices as they battled with one another for control of a mortal's soul. These plays were explicitly designed to teach a moral and improve the behavior of their audience.

Secular plays in this period existed, although documentation is not as extensive. Farces were popular, and the earliest known vernacular farce was the French *Le garçon et l'aveugle* ("The Boy and the Blind Man"), dating from the thirteenth century. The play was probably performed by a professional traveling actor and his young apprentice. In England, Robin Hood plays were popular, and all over Europe interludes with simple plotlines were performed at various social functions. Secular dramas were usually performed in winter indoors, and were often associated with schools, universities, and nobility, who would have the resources, time, and space to perform organized plays.

However, it is not possible to make a distinction between religious and secular theatre during the medieval era. The Roman Catholic Church dominated life for almost every citizen of Europe, and the boundary between secular and sacred was blurred daily. In mystery plays, for example, nonreligious plotlines and non-canonical characters were frequently interwoven with the religious story being told. An especially notable example of this is the *The Second Shepherds' Play*, in which the majority of the story focuses on a comic character trying to hide a sheep he has stolen from the other shepherds on the night of the birth of Christ.

Like any long-lasting art form, the medieval theatre could not continue in a static state forever. Its death (or evolution, depending on the viewpoint) was due mostly to changing political and economic factors. First, the Protestant Reformation targeted the theatre, especially in England, in an effort to stamp out allegiance to Rome. In Wakefield, for example, the local mystery cycle text shows signs of Protestant editing, with references to the Pope crossed out and two plays completely eliminated because they were too Catholic. However, it was not just the Protestants who attacked the theatre of the time. The Council of Trent banned religious plays in an attempt to reign in the extra-biblical material that the Protestants frequently lampooned.

A revival of interest in ancient Roman and Greek culture changed the tastes of the learned classes in the performing arts. Greek and Roman plays were performed and new plays were written that were heavily influenced by the classical style. This led to the creation of Commedia dell'arte and other forms of Renaissance theater.

A change of patronage also caused drastic changes to the theatre. In England the monarch and nobility started to support professional theatre troupes, including Shakespeare's Lord Chamberlain's Men and Kings's Men, which catered to their upper class patron's tastes. These patrons desired to be entertained, not preached to, and as time passed the plays became more secular and refined. In time these same tastes would filter down to the lower classes.



Finally, the construction of permanent theaters, such as the Blackfriars Theater signaled a major turning point from reliance on church facilities, touring groups, and inns as stages. Permanent theaters allowed for more sophisticated staging and storytelling. Moreover, professional troupes that owned their own theatre had more resources with which to prepare their productions, which changed the theatre from a mostly amateur or traveling art form to a professional one with different practices and standards.

### **A Little about Roman Theater**

The audience was often loud and rude, rarely applauding the actors, but always shouting insults and booing. Because the audience was so loud, much of the plays were mimed and repetitive. The actors developed a kind of code that would tell the audience about the characters just by looking at them.

- A black wig meant the character was a young man.
- A gray wig meant the character was an old man.
- A red wig meant the character was a slave.
- A white robe meant the character was an old man.
- A purple robe meant the character was a young man.
- A yellow robe meant the character was a woman. (Needed in early Roman theatre, as originally female characters were played by men, however as the Roman theatre progressed, women slaves took the roles of women in plays.)
- A yellow tassel meant the character was a god.

Plays lasted for two hours, and were usually comedies. Most comedies involved mistaken identity, such as gods disguised as humans.

### **Commedia dell'Arte**

Commedia dell'Arte troupes performed lively improvisational playlets across Europe for centuries. It originated in Italy in the 1560s, and differed from conventional theatre in that it was neither professional nor open to the public. Commedia dell'Arte required only actors at its heart, no scene and very few props were considered absolutely essential. Plays did not originate from scripts but *scenarios*, which were loose frameworks of productions providing only the situations, complications, and outcome of the work. The actors improvised most dialogue and comedic interludes, called *lazzi*. The plays were based around a few stock characters, which could be divided into three groups: the lovers, masters, and servants. The lovers had different names and characteristics in most plays and often were the children of the master's character. The role of master was normally based on one of three stereotypes: Pantalone, an elderly Venetian merchant who wore his pajamas most often; Dottore, Pantalone's friend or rival, a doctor or lawyer who acted far more intelligent than he really was; and Capitano, who was once a lover's character, but evolved into a man who bragged about his exploits in love and war, but was often terrifically unskilled in both. He normally carried a sword and wore a cape and feathered headdress. The servant character type, called *zanni*, had only one recurring role: Arlecchino, also called Harlequin. He was both cunning and ignorant, but an accomplished dancer. He typically carried a wooden stick with a split in the middle so it made a loud noise when striking something. This "weapon" gave us the term "slapstick." A troupe typically consisted of 13 to 14 members. No women were allowed to act in theater at this time. So there were absolutely no female performers. Most actors were paid by taking a share of the play's profits roughly equivalent to the size of their role was in its peak from 1575-1650, but even after that time new scenarios were written and performed.

## Renaissance Theatre

Spanish Golden Age Laws on female actors in Spain theatre thrived during its Golden Age, a period that lasted from about 1580 to 1680. Three types of drama were popular: the religious one acts called autos sacramentales, the secular full-length comedias nuevas, and also the musical zarzuelas. The writers of the comedias nuevas frequently called for female characters to cross-dress as men. In Spain women were first allowed to act in religious plays and later became present in secular performances. Prior to this men and boys played women onstage. The Catholic Church at the time was against theatre and especially the presence of female performers. They believed female actors were prostitutes. The Spanish government passed many laws concerning gender and theatrical performance. In 1587 a law was enacted that made it legal for women to act while simultaneously making it illegal for boys to play women, many attempts to legislate the stage followed this. In 1596 female actors were banned again and shortly after in 1598 the theatres were shut down only to be brought back in 1599, along with women being allowed back onstage. In 1600 the Council of Castile created a document of recommendations to the King that stated women could be onstage, but again boys could not play women, nor could they wear make-up. It was also stipulated that all female actors must be married and have their husband or father with them at the theatre. In the years following 1600 ordinances were put forth which regulated the types of dancing women were allowed to do onstage as well as how they were to dress. In 1653 a law said that when the script required women to cross-dress, they could only do it on the upper half of their body.

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