



The North Wind

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Photo credit: Winifryd Doiron



Baron's Column



Margaret and I had an enjoyable time at 12th Night as our first Kingdom event as Baron and Baroness. It was really great to see the members of Lions Gate that were able to make the trip out and attend the event. We were very pleased to see our Rapier Defender, Lord Callen Drakkar, compete in the Kingdom Rapier Championship. We will be actively encouraging all our defenders to compete at the Principality and Kingdom level tournaments.

The issue of too many events came up at the Noble Estate meeting and later in court, Her Majesty declared that branches will only be allowed to list three events on the Kingdom calendar.

This is an issue that Lions Gate started to tackle last year and we will still be figuring it out as we progress. We cut down from ten events in 2010 to a planned five events this year. We were burning out our autocrats, our members, and pissing off our nearby friends who felt that we were hogging the calendar.

Our three events that will be listed on the Kingdom calendar, i.e. level 1 events, will be Tournament of Armies, Baroness Tourney, and Sealion War (when we host it). Winter Defenders, Summer Defenders, and our Sargeantry trials will be level 2 events.

I have received a number of comments from different sources about events in Lions Gate. Some people want every event to include everything. Others prefer smaller events that focus on just one thing. Obviously, we won't be able to please everyone.

I want to ensure that our events evoke a sense of community. A community is made up of different people with different focuses all working and living together. Hopefully in harmony.

As such, I am going to favour the "something for everyone," because I want the heavy fighters to come out to an A&S event. I want our dancers to be there when we have an archery tournament. Events need to draw from the whole Barony and not just parts of it.

One advantage that I am hoping to see is larger turnout at all events. One of the other comments I have heard from people is that price of events is getting too expensive. There are two things driving up the cost of events. One is that facility rental fees are increasing, and the other is that attendance is dropping as we expand the number of events. Our event fee is based on the expenses for the event and our estimated attendance calculated from historical data.

The upcoming Winter Defenders Tourney is our premiere A&S/Bardic event. The event focuses on showcasing our artisans, our scientists, our poets, our storytellers, our singers, and our dancers. Historically, we know that an event focussing solely on A&S/Bardic is not going to draw that many people out and have set our site fees accordingly. We will see some of heavy fighters, fencers, and archers come out because they are interested in A&S and Bardic but there will also be a fair number that would sooner put their feet up and rest.

If holding a heavy tournament brought us out another 10 fighters who wouldn't normally attend, we could drop our event fee by a couple of dollars and still make just as much. If a rapier tourney brought in another 10 fencers who wouldn't normally attend, we could see the event fee drop from \$15 to a very affordable \$10 for a two day event.

For the most part it is simple math, if you divide the expenses by more bodies, events become cheaper. I used Winter Defenders as an example but this applies to all our events. The more bodies we get at all our events, the more revenue we generate to cover our expenses whether it is for the event itself or other things the Barony wants to spend money on.

This doesn't mean we have to lose focus. The focus on Winter Defenders is Arts and Science and that focus will not change. Yes, we will be deciding who is the new A&S Defender and who is the new Bardic Defender but a competition is just a means of highlighting outstanding work and outstanding people. The focus is still on the Arts and Sciences which includes Bardic. As such, any martial activities could be done to reflect that focus. An example might be recognizing the artistic efforts that go into incorporating the fighter's heraldry as part of a fighters kit (A&S) or having the fighters challenge their opponents and judging them based on their showmanship (Bardic). Classes in period fighting techniques would also be considered Arts and Science. The actual fighting may be martial but learning how they did it in period is A&S.

At an event like Summer Defenders where the focus is on the martial activities, we can find room for A&S displays, dancing, drumming, and bardic circles. Any event can have classes whether they are part of the UTR or Ithra or just done because someone wants to share their knowledge.

If you don't attend a particular event right now, what is it that you would like to see at that event that would make you want to come out to it? Now, ask yourself, what can you do to make it happen?

We are a community. Events are a chance to get the community together. So come on out. Bring a friend. Let's get that attendance up. More people means more friends to talk with. Down the road, it can mean more affordable events.

Editor's Letter

Welcome to my second issue as Chronicler. I may keep counting them like that until I reach double digits. I hope my first issue was well received. I will assume by the lack of feed-back that no one had any major issues with what I've done so far.

February is a short month, and so this will be a short issue. It also has a bit of an archery bias because of the lovely article on Arrow Spining that his Excellency Baron James wrote for us. If you'd prefer a different bias, why not submit an article for next month?

Please enjoy the new issue.

In Service,
Winifryd Doiron

About the North Wind

This is the February 2011 issue of The North Wind, a publication of the **Barony of Lions Gate**, of the **Society for Creative Anachronism**, Inc. (SCA, Inc.) The North Wind is available from the Chronicler, Marissa Fischer (Lady Winifryd Euphemia Doiron), amethyst@gmail.com and is also available from the Barony's website <http://lionsgate.antir.sca.org/public/>. It is not a corporate publication of SCA, Inc. and does not delineate SCA, Inc. Policies.

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Council Highlights Nov. 2010

TOA is BACK!

Tournament of armies is happening, and we need your help!

Callen and his amazing crew are back for a second helping as the Event Steward team for TOA - and they need volunteers for everything from gate to marshals. Callen is also looking for an Event Steward deputy, who will become Event Steward next year.

Council Needs People!

Council still needs applications for the following positions:

Exchequer (desperately)

Master of Blades

Bardic

In addition, the following people are looking for deputies:

Sable Loat Pursuivant (Herald) – Lord Caemgen (Kevin) is looking for a voice herald deputy to act as an understudy in court.

Chronicler - Winifryd Doiron (Wendy) is looking for a deputy to learn the ropes, and help take Council minutes.

Monday Night Cloverdale Mega-Practice!

Looking for something to do Monday nights? Come out to the practice everyone's been talking about! Monday nights at Cloverdale we have a little bit of everything going on - Heavy, Rapier, Archery, even some A&S up in the bleachers! At just \$5 it's cheaper than any date!

Tea and Cocoa At Practice

Just a reminder that tea and cocoa is available at every Monday night - Cloverdale practice, so bring your mugs and your loonies and start (or end) your practice with a nice warm-up!



Upcoming Events

Winter Defenders Tourney

When: February 26 - 27, 2011

Where: Masonic Hall, 508 Agnes Street, New Westminster, BC V3L 1G1

Cost: Adults \$15 (NMS \$5), Youth (13 to 18) \$10, Children (12 and under) - free, Family Cap \$30 (plus applicable NMS) (Max 2 Adults & all minor children "MUNDANE" family only).

A New Day has Dawned!

We come together once more in brightening glory of our land to witness a wonderful opportunity!

As February draws to a close, we call upon you to come and witness the triumph of not one, but TWO Baronial Defenders!

One will emerge above all others as Artisan destined to represent the Barony for the coming year.

One will bring the words and skills needed to capture hearts and souls and wear the Bard's belt.

But, wait, there's more....

We have a number of courses including: Medieval Fixed Form Poetry, Veils, Cordial Making, Haversacks, Period Armour, Persona, Embroidery, Bookmaking, and many more.

Sunday, we will have a rapier tourney where we will test whether the fencers wit is as sharp as their steel. A challenger must goad his opponent into fighting with an appropriate insult, hopefully period. Points will be awarded for creativity, sting, and entertainment value of the insult as well as victory with the steel.

Tir Righ February Investiture

When: March 5 - 6, 2011

Where: Maritime Labour Centre, 1880 Triumph St., Vancouver, BC

Costs: Adults \$15 (NMS \$5), Youth (13-18) \$7, Children (12 and under) - Free, Family Cap \$44 (plus applicable NMS) (Max 2 Adults & all minor children "MUNDANE" family only).

The winds of change blow ever through Tir Righ, and the time has come once more for a new Prince and Princess to ascend the Storm Thrones. Join Lions Gate as we host Tir Righ and celebrate the investiture of Tanist Kheron and Ban-Tanist Kenna as our new Prince and Princess!

At the same event, witness history be made once more as combatants meet to contend for the honour of being our Principality Rapier Champion, the Scar of Tir Righ.

Other scheduled events include peerage meetings and Curia; an arts & sciences display; Saturday evening tavern night with cash bar. No outside alcohol. Please note that due to site regulations there will be no food available for sale on site, but there are plenty of eateries in walking distance.

Lions Gate Calendar of Events


February-2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	1	2	3	4	5

Event Listings for February-2011

Date	Branch	Event
26-27		Lions Gate Winter Defenders Tourney
Mon		Cloverdale Practice - 7 , 14 , 21 , 28
Thu		Baronial Council - 24
Wed		North Wind Deadline - 23
Fri		Bransle - 11
Thu		Rapier Practice - 3 , 10 , 17 , 24
Thu		Dance Practice - 3 , 17
Fri		Newcomer Information Session - 4

March-2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Event Listings for March-2011

Date	Branch	Event
3-6		Kingdom A & S / Bardic Championship
5-6		Tir Righ February Investiture
25-27		Spring Crown Council (Per TRMs Option)
Mon		Cloverdale Practice - 7 , 14 , 21 , 28
Thu		Baronial Council - 24
Wed		North Wind Deadline - 23
Fri		Bransle - 11
Thu		Rapier Practice - 3 , 10 , 17 , 24 , 31
Thu		Dance Practice - 3 , 17
Fri		Newcomer Information Session - 4

April-2011						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Event Listings for April-2011

Date	Branch	Event
Mon		Cloverdale Practice - 4 , 11 , 18 , 25
Thu		Baronial Council - 28
Wed		North Wind Deadline - 27
Fri		Bransle - 8
Thu		Rapier Practice - 7 , 14 , 21 , 28
Thu		Dance Practice - 7 , 21
Fri		Newcomer Information Session - 1

Ask Our Alchemist



Dear Dr. Carus, I am taking stock of what I own. Is zero medieval?

Signed, <blank>

Dear <blank>,

Dr. Carus sympathizes, yet offers the (poor) consolation that, at least, absolute Poverty is Period, and indeed was well-respected in one who embraced it voluntarily as a holy recluse or cenobite; and furthermore, that its mathematical expression did indeed exist in the later Middle Ages.

The Ancient Romans and other Classic cultures had little practical use for the concept of zero, since in commerce, for example, a transaction of zero denarii between parties A and B never actually happened (when was the last time you wrote a cheque for \$0.00?); a contract involving zero

"consideration" is no contract; and just when and how does one divide a fortune amongst zero heirs? To them zero might seem as meaningless to their own daily lives as we might think the square root of -1 is to ours (yet such "imaginary numbers", which date from 16th C Italy, are modernly useful in electrical engineering), and speculations in this area would be Much Ado About Nothing.

Furthermore, in Roman numerals, to express a number such as a hundred and one, it sufficed to write a "C" for "hundred" then an "I" for "one", and the mere lack of any "X" sufficed to show there were no further loose "tens", that needs must be specified in the notation "101". Physical science similarly stumbled over the notion of "vacuum" – philosophers from Plato and Aristotle ("Nature abhors a vacuum") through Descartes wondered how "nothing" could be said to "exist" – though a 13th-century Church commission formally declared that God had both the right and the power to create a vacuum (and multiple worlds, etc etc) if He chose.

Though the 3rd millennium BC Babylonians and ancient Chinese had a form of "positional" notation for numbers (the latter "representing" zero as a blank space), the breakthrough came in 3rd C BC India with the invention of a dot, called *sunya*, to express an empty space in the counting-board. "1234567890" and their manipulations probably reached Baghdad with a diplomatic mission from Sind in 773 AD, and were the subject of al-Khwarizmi's popular *Arithmetic* of 820 AD; the so-called "Arabic numerals" reached Europe with the writings of Pope (and reputed sorcerer) Sylvester II around 999, and gained definite popularity with Fibonacci's *Liber Abaci* ("The Book of Calculation") in 1202. Interestingly, it was eventually found that the concept had independently arisen in Mesoamerica around the 5th C AD, where it was applied, for instance, in the modulo (cyclic) Maya "Long Count" calendar to identify years that were both the end of one epoch and the beginning of the next (some have calculated the upcoming 2012 AD to be one of these) – in contrast to the "absolute" *העולם לבריאת*/Etos Kosmou/Anno Mundi ("in the year of the Universe") Hebrew and Byzantine systems that number the years from when (as calculated) time itself began; and the Anno Domini ("in the year of Our Lord") BC/AD system of the Western Church, open-ended on either side of a pivotal Event.

Further Reading:

Teresi, D. *Lost Discoveries: The Ancient Roots of Modern Science*, 2002, p 79-87 & 379-382.

Kaplan, R. *The Nothing That Is: A Natural History of Zero*, 2000.

~~Scroll~~ Stone of the Month



HE Thora Golvik, outgoing Bardic Champion of Lionsdale, holds the soapstone THL Wulfstan Hrafnsson carved and darkened with black gouache for her. The design incorporates the raven badge taken from her viscounty circlet

The English wording in Elder Futhark reads, “Wordfame rides on ravens' wings. Let all know that Thora Golvik has been Lionsdale's champion, sung our songs, sung our praise, for which we honour her this day. 5 Feb AS 45. Wulfstan wrote these words in stone at the end of winter.”

Archery Tips - Arrow Spine

If you have ever seen high-speed footage of an arrow in flight, you will realize that the term “straight as an arrow,” certainly doesn't describe its movement. Indeed, the arrow can look like it is made out of rubber that snakes its way towards the target.

All arrows are flexible, but their flexibility may vary from one wooden arrow to another. An archer's goal is to have arrows that are consistent in their amount of flex. This flexibility is called the spine of an arrow.

Different bows will require arrows with different spines. The draw-weight of the bow is a major factor in the determining what is the best spine for a particular bow. As such, the spine of an arrow is normally stated in pounds corresponding to the draw weight of the bow. Other factors such as the bow design also play into the determination of what is the best spine for a bow.

The best spine for a bow is the spine that makes it appear like the arrow is shooting straight. You point the arrow at what you want to hit, at least vertically, where you want it to hit. An arrow that is too stiff will shoot to the left for a right-handed shooter. An arrow that is too flexible will shoot to the right for a right-handed shooter. A perfectly spined arrow will go right where you point it.



Fig. 1 - An arrow spine tester

So lets look at what we have to do to get that perfectly spined arrow.

Spine is determined using a spine tester as shown in the picture. This spine tester was designed by Maple Ridge bowyer, Roy Day.

An arrow is laid across two supports 26” apart. A two pound weight is placed on the middle of the arrow and the deflection is measured. (Fig. 1)



Fig. 2 - The arrow tests out at 42 pounds

In this design, the deflection moves a lever arm and a small arrowhead points out the spine of the arrow in pounds. In the closeup picture, we can see this shaft is spined at around 42 pounds. (Fig. 2) This is the real spine of the arrow.

When we buy arrows, we will buy them based on the real spine but there are other factors that will come into play that can effect the spine as we shoot. This is called dynamic or effective spine. The factors that come into play include the length of the arrow, the point weight, and even the bow itself.

Let's start with the bow. The spining charts were based on ELBs (English Long Bow) originally and not our modern bows. A modern recurve has a cut-in handle. This allows the arrow to rest along the center of the bow. A period bow does not have this cut-out and the arrow rests away from the center line. If you are shooting a period bow, you will want an arrow spine that matches your bow, but if you are shooting a recurve, you can go up 5 pounds in the arrow spine.

Arrow length is the next factor. The spine weight determined by the spine tester is based on an arrow shaft that is 28 inches long. If you have ever broken up some sticks for firewood, you know that it is easier to break a long stick than a short stick. Longer sticks are just more flexible than shorter sticks. The same applies to arrows. An arrow shaft longer than 28" is going to be more flexible than an arrow shaft shorter than 28". The standard rule of thumb is a 1 inch difference results in 3-5 pounds difference in spine.

Let's say you are shooting a 35 pound modern recurve and your draw length is 28" but you would like your arrows to be 30" in case you break the tip off. The draw weight is 35 pounds but since it is a modern recurve, we will add another 5 pounds. If our arrows were 28", we would be buying shafts spined at 40 pounds. However, since the arrow is 2" longer than the standard length, the dynamic spine will drop by 6-10 pounds. To compensate, we actually need an arrow shaft that is spined around 46 – 50 pounds.

If your arrows were cut to 27 inches, the dynamic spine would increase by 3 – 5 pounds. To compensate, you would want to start with arrows spined 3 -5 pounds lighter. With our 35 pound recurve, we would be looking at 35 lbs + 5 lbs (modern recurve) – 5 lbs (1" shorter) or 35 pounds.

For consistency, archers want arrows spined with 5 pounds of each. Archers also want arrows that are close to each other in weight (within 50 grains) but spining is more important.

The above calculations will get you in the ball park but you will need to tune your arrows by shooting them and adjusting factors that affect spine. The primary item you will adjust is the length. Start long and cut the arrows down a little bit each time until you get arrows that group where you want them to. This process can be sped up using a bareshaft tuning technique where some of the arrows shot are not fletched or by using a paper tuning technique where a large sheet of paper is set up in front of the target and you examine the rips.

If you get concerned about cutting the arrows down too much, you can change the arrow point. A typical weight is 125 grains but you can buy them heavier or lighter. Under Newton's Law of Couch Potatoes, objects at rest want to stay at rest. From behind, the string pushes the arrow. The shaft wants to surge forward but there is the big heavy couch potato of an arrow point up front wanting to stay at rest. This reluctance to move aids in the flexing of the arrow since the shaft has to do something with the force. The heavier the weight, the more the shaft flexes. And just as it is easier to push someone lighter, the lighter the arrow head the less the shaft flexes.

If you are beginning archer, you don't worry about point weight. You buy the standard 125 grain points and only concern yourself with length. When you are ready, you can play with point weight.

Shoot straight,
Baron James

A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Event

Alastair the Traveller

Many years ago (15 at least, probably more....) Colin and I were on our way to a local event of a Friday afternoon in my dragon of the time - a small VW Rabbit. Since we had many pavilion poles and pole arms longer than the inside of the car, all such items were strapped onto a roof rack. Given the strange shape of the pole weapons (not to mention all the duct tape), they were clearly quite noticeable.

At a traffic light, a passenger in a large pick-up truck beside us leaned out his window, and we had the following exchange of words:

Passenger: "What are all those funny looking things on your roof?"

Me (the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth - of course): "Pole weapons."

Passenger (hesitantly): "OOOokkkk...but what are they used for?"

Me (nothing but the truth again!): "Killing people."

Passenger (rolling up his window as quickly as possible): "Yeah right."



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