

THE TIDINGS

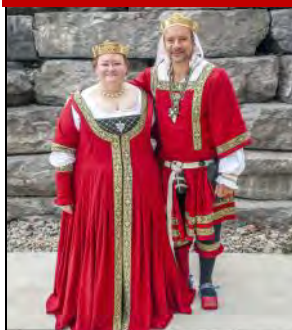
Official Newsletter
of the Kingdom
of Ealdormere

Inside this issue:
Missive from Their Majesties
Welcome New Peers
New! Order of the Mark
Event Flyers
Ludicra: Fun & Games!

November 2025 AS LX



Regnum Ealdormerensis



Their Majesties
King Tristham Ovirna I Groffa
&
Queen Anneke
(Jon Gibson & Lois Kerr)
ealdormere.crown@gmail.com

Their Highnesses
TBD
ealdormere.heirs@gmail.com



Greater Kingdom Officers (Privy Council)



Kingdom Seneschal:
Duchess Breyla La Viennette
(Natasha Roach)
ealdormere.kseneschal@gmail.com



Kingdom Earl Marshal:
Sir Elizabeth Mortimer (Karen Prentice)
earlmarshal.ealdormere@gmail.com



Kingdom Chronicler:
Duchess Kaylah the Cheerful
(Alisa Dymont)
ealdormere.kchronicler@gmail.com



Chancellor of the Exchequer:
Lady Catherine Rose Lamont
(Shelley Black) 647-204-4010
101-1005 Pembridge Cres.,
Kingston, ON, K7P 1Y2
ealdormere.exchequer@gmail.com



Trillium Herald:
Lord Matthaus Lindenhayn von Shaffhausen
(Daniel Patterson)
trilliumherald@gmail.com



Kingdom Minister of Arts & Sciences:
Meisterin Siglinde Harfnerstochter
(Diane Harper)
ealdormere.kmoas@gmail.com



Lord Clerk Register:
Baron Penda of Glyndmere
(Mark Paisley)
ealdormereweb@gmail.com



Kingdom Chatelaine
Sir Brand Thorwaldsen
(Blair Demarco-Wettlauffer)
ealdormere.chatelaine@gmail.com



SOCIETY FOR CREATIVE ANACHRONISM INC
Phone: 800-789-7486 or 408-263-9305 www.sca.org
Online newsletters available at: <http://enewsletter.sca.org/>
Membership forms available at: <https://www.sca.org/>

SCA Homepage



Society Seneschal: (Stacy Hall) Gwennodolynn ni hAilleachain (408) 333-9904 | seneschal@sca.org
SCA Board Chair: Martin Lochner, (Mark Faulcon), | mfaulcon@director.sca.org
President: Bao Pham (Baron Baudoyne de Lafayette) | president@sca.org
Ombudsman for Ealdormere: Rhianwen ferch Bran ap Gruffydd (Joan Steurer) | jsteuerer@director.sca.org
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Louise Du Cray | insurance@sca.org | VPCorpOps@sca.org

Society DEIB Officer: Castellana de Andulucia (Roxi J. Elliot) deib@sca.org
Office of Inclusive Programs: Dominica Maquerelle (Emily Renee Carroll) inclusivity@sca.org

QUARTERLY BOARD MEETINGS <https://www.sca.org/board-meetings/>

- October 17 & 18, 2025 (hybrid): Barony of Three Rivers, Kingdom of Calontir,
Embassy Suites by Hilton St. Louis-St. Charles, Two Convention Center Plaza, Saint Charles, MO, 63303
[Click here to register to attend the meeting virtually via Zoom.](#)

- Mid Quarter Conference calls:

All meetings start at 10:00 am unless otherwise noted. Attendees are asked to wear modern clothing to Board meetings. Agenda submissions by the first of the month of meeting.

Board Meetings





QR for Kingdom Calendar

Event Calendar

<https://ealdormere.ca/how-to-register-your-event-the-kingdom-of-ealdormere/>



QR for Register Your Event

October 20205

1 Deadline for November Tidings

4 Huntsman's Harvest, Barony of Ben Dunfith (Binbrook , ON)

18 Laurel Showdown, Shire of Batille du Lac, (Lindsay, ON)

25 Fall Crown Tournament, Canton of Caldrithig (Greely, ON)

November 2025

1 Deadline for December Tidings

22 Feast of the Hare, Canton of Caldrithig (Ottawa, ON)

29 The Revival of the Feast of Bacchus (Thorold, ON)

29-30 Known World Newcomer's Symposium, Virtual <https://www.atenveldt.org/kwns-2025/>

December 2025

1 Deadline for January Tidings

6 Wassail, Canton of Bryniau Tywynnog (Shakespeare, ON)

January 2026

1 Deadline for February Tidings

24 Blue Dragon Studium, Canton of Ard Chreag (Oshawa, ON)

31 Known World Chatelaines Summit. Virtual <https://www.sca.org/virtual-chatelaines-summit-jan-31-2026/>

February 2026

1 Deadline for March Tidings

7 Tournoi du Coeur de Glace, Shire of Bastille du Lac (Belleville, ON)

28 Masque by Moonlight, Canton of Der Welfengau (Guelph, ON)

28 Practicum, Canton of Caldrithig (Ottawa, ON)

March 2026

1 Deadline for April Tidings

14 Winter War, Shire of Trinovantia Nova (Paris, ON)

28 Kingdom A&S, Barony of Ramshaven (Guelph, ON)

QR for Kingdom Event Rotation

Kingdom Event Rotation



2026 2026 Spring A&S: Ramshaven
2026 Spring Coronation: Shires
(assist Skraeling Althing)
2026 Spring Crown: Rising Waters
2026 Fall Coronation: Ben Dunfirth
2026 Fall Crown: Septentria

2027 2027 Spring A&S: Skraeling Althing
2027 Spring Coronation: Ramshaven
2027 Spring Crown: Shires (assist Septentria)
2027 Fall Coronation: Rising Waters
2027 Fall Crown: Ben Dunfirth

2028 2028 Spring A&S: Septentria
2028 Spring Coronation: Skraeling Althing
2028 Spring Crown: Ramshaven
2028 Fall Coronation: Shires (assist Ben Dunfirth)
2028 Fall Crown: Rising Waters

2029 2029 Spring A&S: Ben Dunfirth
2029 Spring Coronation: Septentria
2029 Spring Crown: Skraeling Althing
2029 Fall Coronation: Ramshaven
2029 Fall Crown: Shires (assist from
Rising Waters)

Ealdormere
Homepage



www.ealdormere.ca



From Their Majesties

Greetings Wonderful Populace of Ealdormere!

Wassail!

Thank you to everyone for a wonderful Coronation Day. From our gracious hosts and team that put together such a magical event in Hiawatha, to our dear (but sick, thus absent) friends Master Corwyn and Duchess Domnail and team putting together such a tasty and unique Landsknecht Feast, to our chosen family stepping down in Count Gann and Countess Maeggwyn and all the other special things that went down in Ealdormerean history as we took the reigns.

Master Daniel of Whitby became the Premier of the Order of Mark on this same day and we very much were honoured to elevate Druzhinnick Magistra Nika and Master Iohn Spooner as they joined their esteemed order this very weekend at Huntsman's Harvest in our Barony of Ben Dunfirth...even begging a boon for Baron Brendan to join them when he chooses to sit his vigil.

Speaking of Huntsman's... and boons.. there was also a Boon begged from His Grace Roak where we were minded to put on vigil, Count Crispin.

Not only all that, there was a royal distribution of ham and cheese sandwiches.

Yes, sandwiches for all who serve. We welcome you all to get your "Royal sammies"! There was also "The Grand Ham Slam" where the champions of each discipline added their names to the "eternal sandwich trophy" which will document their victory that day.

The King was challenged by each champion (archery, thrown weapons, Heavy and Fencing) to a wager where his very sandwich was at stake....and sadly (or happily) his lunch was taken, all 4 times! Anyway, if you haven't noticed a theme, we like sandwiches! :)

Lastly, please know dear populace that we can't be everywhere at once (though we certainly try). We depend on you (yes YOU!) to put in your recommendations for awards and accolades (see our kingdom website) to make right people who may have gone unnoticed. Please flatter your friends, say nice things about your team members and let us know where we have blind spots.

PS

Friendly Reminder: Crown Tourney is getting closer, please get your paperwork in before our deadline.

Wassail Ealdormere!

King Tristham & Queen Anneke



Count Gann and Countess Maeggwyn collect their pink slips and merrily retire from the court.



The populace swears fealty.

Ealdormere is Enriched with New Peers

Barony of Rising Waters new Baronial Nobles:
Okimâw Mihko Pîsim & Umesaya Soukurou-dono



Sir Kolbjorn Skatkaupandi:
Order of the Chivalry



Master Penn de Moranza:
Order of the Laurel



Master Daniel of Whitby,
Master Iohn Spooner,
Magistra Nika Dmitrieva
doch'Zvezdina



Order of
the Mark





From The Kingdom Seneschal

Greetings,

It has been a wonderful start to our autumn season. Congratulations to King Tristham and Queen Anneke on your Coronation, It was magical. I am looking forward to working with you both during your reign. Soon it will be time to secure the line of the North in case something unlikely were to happen. You have until Midnight October 14th 2025 to put in your intent.

I would like to remind people that when you see something that may break our rules of regalia, please be kind in how you do so. How you speak to someone in this situation may very well decide whether or not this person chooses to continue to play.

I am pleased to announce that we have a bid for Kingdom A&S to be held March 28 2026 in the Barony of Ramshaven. We are still looking for bids for Spring Coronation and Spring Crown. It would be great to have our Kingdom events on the calendar as soon as possible.

I am looking forward to seeing everyone at our upcoming events

In Service
Breyla La Viennette



From The Kingdom Earl Marshal

Hello from my estates of Hundehugel.

Part of my job is to make marshal activities easier for you.

Right now, forms are buried in handbooks and are neither convenient nor easy to find and print..

To make things easier I have been adding the forms to the library. They are listed under "Earl Marshal".

<https://ealdormere.ca/library/#marshaldocs>

As of today (September 25), the MiT form and the Deputy Marshal Quarterly reporting forms are active. I will be adding more in upcoming days and weeks, so please keep your eyes on the library.

Stay Safe, have fun,
Elizabeth



From The Kingdom Youth Armored Marshal

Kindest Regards,

It is with no small amount of sadness that I must announce I will be stepping down as your Kingdom Youth Armored Marshal. I took over the role from Evander in 2023, and it is time to let someone else have as much fun as I had.

If you have your Warrant and Background Check, please consider applying.

In addition to the usual administrative stuff, you will help guide a small but enthusiastic group of Potential Future Champions who deserve every opportunity we can create for them.

Applicants are asked to submit their info to Sir Elizabeth at earlmarshal.ealdormere@gmail.com

The Honorable Lord Wulfgang Donnerfaust



From The Kingdom Chronicler

Greetings to the Good Citizens of Ealdormere,

Did you know that each Barony has a newsletter? Check out what is happening in your Barony as your local Chronicler records history in the making! The newsletters are available to all, and they are free! Follow the links on your Baronial webpage.

Thank you to all our Chroniclers for preserving a snapshot of the local events and activities.

Please remember to register your event with the Kingdom Calendar Secretary, Mistress Augusta. <https://ealdormere.ca/how-to-register-your-event-the-kingdom-of-ealdormere/>

If you wish to have The Tidings and Vox delivered directly to your inbox each month please email me to join the mailing list at: ealdormere.kchronicler@gmail.com.

Cheerfully in Service,
Duchess Kaylah



The Shire of Bastille du Lac presents:

Laurel Showdown

October 18, 2025

Website: <https://baronessmatilda.wixsite.com/laurel-throwdown-com>

The artists who make up the Order of the Laurel in Ealdormere were given a challenge- roll the dice and make a project! We'll be making one thing that we're known for and one thing we've never done before to compete for bragging rights in this totally new format. There will be displays, interactive presentations, round tables and lots more artsy geekery to see and do, so come and join us as the Order of the Laurel Throws Down!

Site: Lindsay Armouries

210 Kent St., Lindsay, ON K9V 2Y8

Site opens: 9 am Site Closes: 7 pm

Adult Member Discount Registration: \$25

Adult Event Registration: \$35

Event Steward: Baroness Matilda Swynford
(Deb Mattingly) baronessmatilda@gmail.com

Lunch Table: included in event registration!

Feast: no feast



Barony of Skraeling Althing presents:

Fall Crown Tournament

October 25, 2025

Website: <https://ealdormere.ca/crown-tournament-fall/>

Join us in beautiful Skaeling Althing to witness the securing of the Line of the North! Merchants! Fencing! A&S class on "How to use a Lucet". Dancing!

Site: Greely Legion,
8021 Mitch Owen's Rd., Greely, On, K4P 1N5

Site Opens: 9:00am Site Closes: 9pm

Adult Member Event Registration: \$20

Adult non-member: \$30

Lunch: \$10 by Robert the Blue

Feast: \$20 by Elsebeth Farbryn (\$15 for servers)

Event Stewards: Constance of Caldrithig (Heather Hanna)

constance.payne@gmail.com

Alienor the Traveller (Lori Halfper) lori.halfper1@gmail.com





The Canton of Caldrethig presents :
Feast of the Hare : A Celestial Quest

November 22, 2025 Website: <https://ealdormere.ca/feast-of-the-hare/>

At this year's Feast of the Hare, become a stargazer and time traveler of the Middle Ages as together we bring Their Lapine Excellencies the stars. Explore ancient astronomical events, from comets to eclipses, and decode the hidden messages in the stars—just as medieval scholars and astrologers once did. Dress in your preferred medieval garb and prepare to explore multiple time periods as cosmic wonders unfold before you. Within the event, we will create three distinct medieval experiences to provide an immersive experience for attendees:

- The Nordic Hall: Discover the starry skies that guided Vikings across the seas.
- The Bazaar: Explore how ancient traders looked to the heavens for signs of prosperity and direction.
- The Tudor Hall: Engage with the ways that stars influenced medieval life.

Planned Activities: Celestial-inspired Tudor feast, A&S Competition, Astrological readings and fortune-telling, Astronomical viewing and Introduction to Medieval Astronomy class, Bardic circle, Café-style Levantine lunch, Chiara Stella: Dance of the Middle Ages, Eastern-inspired Bazaar, Armoured Combat and Rapier, Inclusive baronial tax collaboration, Period-themed activities, Pin the Tail on the Comet, Court at Their Majesties and Their Excellencies Whim.

Site: Bell's Corners United Church
3995 Old Richmond Rd, Ottawa, ON K2H 5C5

Site opens: 10:30am Site Closes: 9pm

Adult Member Discount Registration: \$20

Adult Event Registration: \$30

Youth 17 & under free

Lunch: TBD

Feast : \$25 adults, \$12 minors

Feast Reservations: Sadb ingen Ui Fhaoladh
(Cydney Foote) sadb.caldrethig@gmail.com

Event Stewards: Lady Amalthea of Skyrideg
(Ashlee Beattie) amalthea.lady.in.waiting@gmail.com



KNOWN WORLD
NEWCOMER'S
SYMPOSIUM

SATURDAY, NOV 29, 2025



SUNDAY, NOV 30, 2025

Engage in an online gathering for newcomers to the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA)! This exciting event offers a mix of education and camaraderie for those new to the SCA. Participate in classes on historical arts, fighting, and so much more. There's something for everyone! Connect with seasoned members and peers, engage in discussions, and make new friends within this vibrant community. We look forward to seeing you!

To sign up for the event, or to propose a class to teach, fill out the Registration Form at:

<https://www.atenveldt.org/kwns-2025/>

Closer to the date of the event, you will receive an emailed link inviting you to the symposium, as well as a course book for the event. Class Proposal Registration ends October 31st.

Time: 8:00 AM to 12:00AM CST

Sponsoring Group: Kingdom of Atenveldt

Location: Held virtually on Zoom

Event Registration Fees: Free

Event Steward: Lady Victoria de la Encrucijada (MKA: Victoria Zambrano)

Email: victoriaencrucijada@gmail.com

Co-Steward: Mistress Kolgrima Asgeirsdottir (MKA: Ellie Acton)

Email: laughingwolfhall@gmail.com

***Time subject to change**



The Barony of Rising Waters presents:
The Revival of The Feast of Bacchus
 November 29, 2025

Website: <https://ealdormere.ca/barony-of-rising-waters/>

A casual event of feasting, friendship and games. Merchant Market! Tavern! Games! Fully accessible.
 No martial activities.

Site: The Thorold Senior Centre
 8 Carleton St. S., St. Catharines, ON, L2V 5C2
 Site opens: 10am Site Closes: 8pm

Adult Member Discount Registration: \$25

Adult Event Registration: \$35

Youth under 17: Free

Feast is included in site fee.

Event Stewards: Baron Dmitri Kievskoli (Sam Hardie) Shardie@cogeco.ca

Baroness Gema Krasil ni'Kova (Jennifer Hardie)
jennifer_etty@hotmail.com

Reservation Steward: Comtesse Genevieve Chastellain (Jennifer Moore)
Gen13comtesse@bell.net



The Canton of Bryniau Tywynnog presents:
Wassail
 December 6, 2025



Website: <https://ealdormere.ca/wassail/>

Facebook link: <https://www.facebook.com/share/17DDRW5zxM/>

Join us for Bryniau Tywynnog's annual holiday gathering. This year the theme is bells.
 Annual charity tournaments for both fencing and armoured combat. Bar by Master Adnar Diondair.

Site: Shakespeare Optimist Hall,
 3976 Galt St., Shakespeare, ON, N0B 2P0
 Site opens: 10am (9am for royalty and set up)
 Site Closes: 9 pm

Adult Member Discount Registration: \$20

Adult Event Registration: \$30

Youth ages 14-17 and up Registration: \$10

Youth 13 and under: free of charge

Lunch: Soup potluck, bread & butter provided

Feast: \$20 by THL Isabella von Sachen

Bar: Adnar's famous bar is back!
 Wide variety of libations!

Event Stewards: Lady Alice of Ramshaven
 (Lydia Gormanshaw) AliceofRamshaven@gmail.com
 Duchess Rylyn Buchanan (Beth Patchet)
2fishycat@gmail.com



The Canton of Ard Chreag presents:
Blue Dragon Studium
 January 24, 2026

Website: TBA

A day long event featuring an assortment of A & S classes and workshops of varying lengths and topics.
 Complimentary tea and coffee included. Assorted soft drinks available on honour bar system.

Site: Woodview Community Centre
 151 Cadillac Avenue North, Oshawa, ON, L1G 6C3
 Site opens: 8:30am Site Closes: 5:30 pm

Adult Member Discount Registration: \$25

Adult Event Registration: \$35

Youth under 18: Free

Lunch Table: \$10 Please see website for lunch reservation info

Event Steward: THL Kaolin the Clever
 (Kathleen Daoust) kdaoust5075@rogers.com



The Shire of Bastille du Lac :
Tournoi du Coeur de Glace
February 7, 2026

Website: <https://baronessmatilda.wixsite.com/tournoi>

The Shire of Bastille du Lac would like to invite all Armoured and Rapier combatants to compete in the first tournament of the year! The day will begin with a procession of fighters and consorts. If you do not have a consort, feel free to fight for your King, Queen, Prince, Princess, Baron, Baroness, Family, or Friends. As in previous years, the tournament will alternate between Armoured and Fencing Combat. A shield tree will be in use to track the tournament. *Please be advised that great weapons will be limited due to ceiling height.* Prizes awarded to First, Second, and Third place competitors for both the Armoured, and Fencing tournaments.

Site: Belleville Fish & Game Club
170 Elmwood Dr., Belleville, ON, N8N 4Z4
Site opens: 9am Site Closes: 7pm
Adult Member Event Registration: \$20
Adult Event Registration: \$30
Youth under 18, free

Lunch: will be posted on event website
Feast: There is no feast, please plan accordingly
Event Stewards: Countess Isabel Atwyll (Candace Johnston-Bragg) isabel.atwyll@gmail.com



The Canton of Der Welfengau :
Masque by Moonlight
February 28, 2026

The feast, the food, the mood!

Website: <https://ealdormere.ca/masque-by-moonlight/>

Site: Guelph Curling Club
816 Woolwich Dr., Guelph, ON, N1H 6J2
Site opens: 5pm Site Closes: 11pm
Adult Member Event Registration: TBD
Adult Event Registration: TBD

Feast: Included in site fee
Event Stewards: Lord Aldwynn of Canterbury
(Richard Albrecht) aldwynnofcanterbury@gmail.com



The Barony of Ramshaven presents :
Kingdom Arts & Sciences
March 28, 2026

Website:

Kingdom Arts & Sciences competition! Spacious new site, lots of parking.
All are invited to join in with the Big Box Bonanza!

Site: Lakeside Church
7654 Conservation Rd., Guelph, ON, N1H 6J1
Site opens: 9 am Site Closes: 7 pm
Adult Member Discount Registration: \$22
Adult Registration: \$32
Youth under 18: free of charge
Lunch: \$8, prepared by the Canton of Northgaetham

Event Stewards: Baroness Brigit (Heather Gloska) henryandbrigit@gmail.com
Sir Elizabeth (Karen Prentice) sneetch1@yahoo.com
*Site is dry. Entries with alcohol will be judged at the nearby home of Baroness Brigit and Baron Henry.

Ealdormere
Homepage



www.ealdormere.ca

Let there be Sandwiches!





History is Made: The Order of the Mark

I here swear fealty to the Crown of Ealdormere.
 In hope and fortitude, I pledge my hand and eye,
 To guard the North at the Crown's command.
 To share Ealdormere's bounty.
 My heart shall be loyal.
 My aim shall be true.
 Thus swear I, (name)

Ludos

For Ealdormere's Erudite : Monthly Challenge

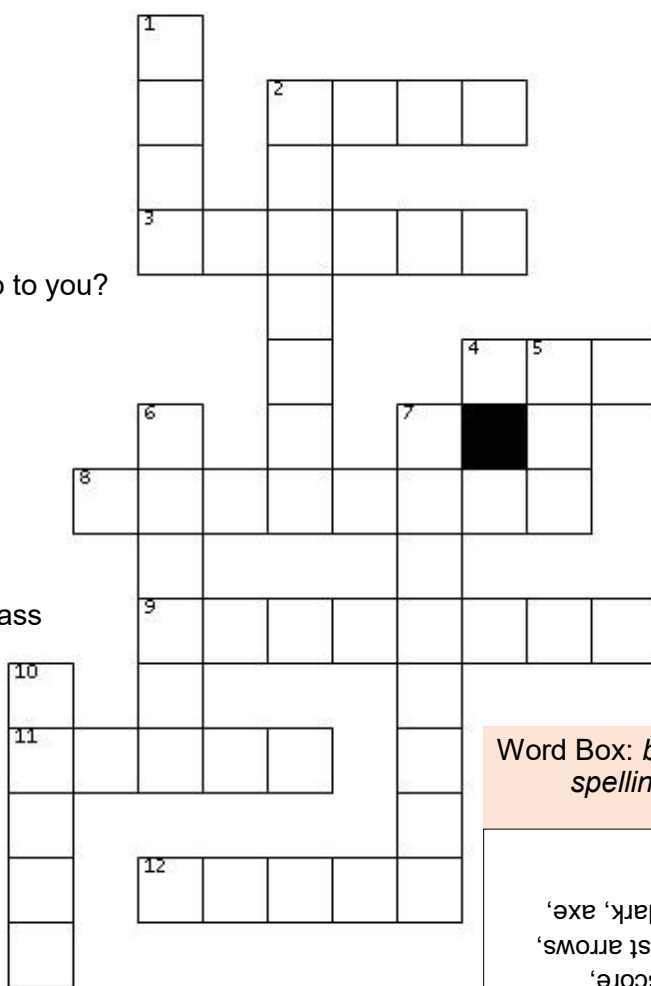
A Day on the Range

ACROSS

2. new Peerage: Order of the _____
3. poor thing is scared, what did it ever do to you?
4. keeping a cool head
8. perfect center
9. forearm protection
11. flies true
12. math is hard

DOWN

1. arrows evilly giggling, unseen in the grass
2. safety first!
5. not just for trees anymore
6. convenient holder
7. found it!
10. usually a long long walk



Word Box: *because medieval spelling may vary.*

hat, arrow, target, score,
 marshal, retrieve, lost arrows,
 range, vambrace, Mark, axe,
 bullseye, quiver



Meet Ealdormere's newest peers in The Order of the Mark.
 Learn about our encouraging program for youth in this month's issue of Vox Borealis: "Right on Target!"

Available under Ealdormere's supplemental newsletter at SCA,
<http://enewsletter.sca.org/>

or by subscribing with the Kingdom Chronicler.
ealdormere.kchronicler@gmail.com



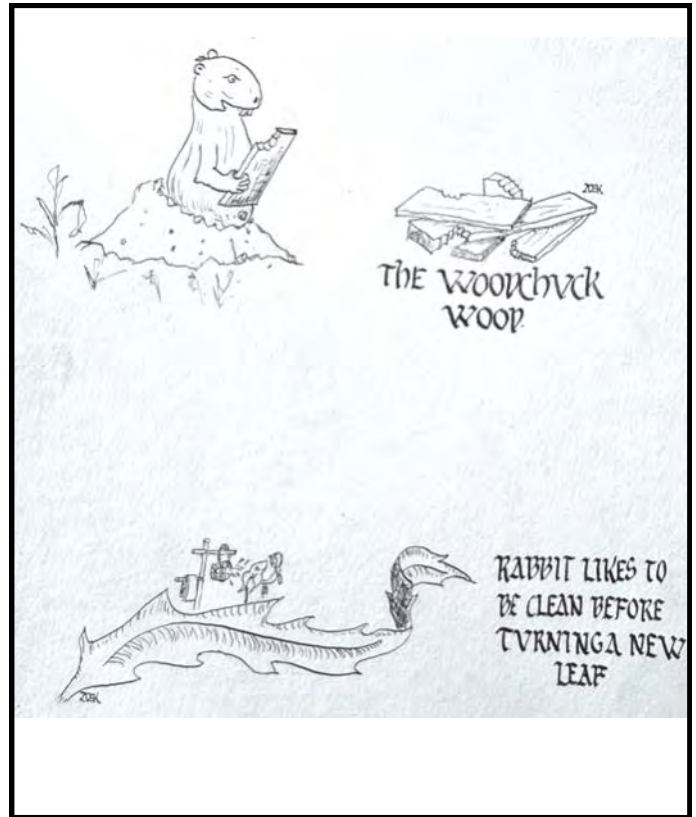
SCA newsletters

Ludicra

Parallax by Duchess Kaylah the Cheerful



Adnar's Acre by Master Adnar Dionadair



Parallax by Duchess Kaylah the Cheerful

We like big butts, and we cannot lie.



Order of the Mark

Nika's Fable

One day the Grand Prince and Princess called three great warriors - Daniel, Iohn and Nika - on a quest, to prove their worth to join Their Druzhina in defence of the realm. They were all noble combatants, each keen of eye, strong of arm, and calm of speech.

Taking his bow, the Grand Prince shot three arrows into the air, in three different directions. The arrows sailed far into the distance, and the warriors galloped after them until they were lost to the sight of the Court.

The others found much adventure before returning home, to rewards and glory. But this is the tale of Nika.

Nika travelled deep into the dark woods, following the invisible trail of the white arrow, along streams, and across mountains, until she came to a great lake. After such a long journey, Nika was tired. She settled herself to sleep beneath her cloak, hidden by a thicket of reeds.

That night, while the stars were shining, she suddenly woke up. A flock of five white swans, crying and calling to each other, flew down to the lake and began to rest and eat and drink from the water. As they drank, each swan turned into a beautiful young maiden, dressed all in white.

The five maidens walked softly into the woods and disappeared, and Nika fell back to sleep.

In the morning, there was nothing but the deep dark lake, lapping the shore. All day long, Nika searched the shore and the hills, finding nothing. Yet that night again she woke to the sound of calling birds, saw their white ghosts along the shingle, and watched the maidens disappear once more into the woods.

The third night, she was determined. She concealed herself in brush at the edge of the trees and waited. When the swan-maidens passed, silently she followed them deep into the woods. There, they entered a beautiful gate of pearls and silver, and she followed them in, stopping in shadows.

Beyond was a hall of twelve gold trees, leaved with silver. As Nika walked past, she broke a twig off here, a leaf off there, and hid them in her sleeves, to prove where she had been. The maidens heard the sounds but told each other, "It is only the wind." Finally, the maidens entered a large room, and cast themselves weeping on the couches therein. "Alas, Alas, caught in a net of evil magic! Doomed to spend our days as swans, our nights as maidens! Alas, our father the

Prince, will we never see him again!" And each exhausted maiden fell asleep.

Then did Nika realize they were the missing daughters of the Prince and Princess, cursed by the terrifying Baba Yaga.

She went to each sleeper, plucked a single white thread from each robe, and stole silently back through the hall of glittering trees, to the gate of pearl and silver, through the black woods to the shore of the silent lake, and hid in the thicket. Dawn broke. The five maidens returned to the shore, and lo! Five white swans flew up into the sky. And the threads in Nika's hand were five white feathers.

Taking her best shafts, she fletched them with the white swan feathers. She unwound her hair, and restrung the bow with the strongest tresses. Finally, she fashioned the gold and silver plucked from the trees into magical cuffs for her wrists.

Then, she walked into the marsh beside the lake, to seek Baba Yaga's hut. It soon grew dark and noisome. The insects sang feverishly in the *mertvaja voda* (Murt Viya Vo-Dah), the dead water, and the further she went the worse it was.

At last, as night was falling, she found the clearing, the hideous fence of ribs and femurs crowned with human skulls, and Baba Yaga's hut. The eyes of the skulls burned red in the dark, and Baba Yaga herself flew into the yard, riding in her mortar and wielding her pestle.

"Well, Nika, and did you find the hidden gate, and steal gold and silver from my trees, and snatch glittering threads from my maidens? You will never free them. They are Mine!"

And Baba Yaga laughed and laughed, and began to mutter a new curse that would tie Nika up in chains and stones. Each word she said was a curl of black smoke. Then, Nika drew her bow and loosed her swan-fletched arrows, one by one.

The first destroyed Baba Yaga's beehive stove and its smouldering fire, where so many had perished.

The second struck the chicken feet of the house, and the hut crashed down and broke into flinders. Baba Yaga screeched with anger! She chanted her curse for Nika faster and faster.

The third struck the fence of bones, which collapsed and turned to dust. But the terrible



curse was growing solid in the air, making Nika's arms heavy. She had to hurry. The fourth struck Baba Yaga's mortar, which cracked and broke, dropping her to the ground.

Finally, as the curse drew close and grasped her shoulder, Nika's last and greatest arrow took flight. It tore the air like silk, and its thunderclap struck Baba Yaga full in the chest. The curse dissolved! The arrow carried Baba Yaga high off into the air, and whether she came down, and whether she lives, no one knows.

The stars turned, and it was dawn.

Then, five swans came circling down. As each alighted, Nika sprinkled them with *zhivaya voda* (Shiv Viya Vo-Dah), the living water. Each swan became a beautiful maiden, dressed in silver and white, with gold ornaments. Nika conveyed them home with all haste to the Grand Prince and Princess, who showered her with riches and honour, naming her Druzhinnik, the first Archer to join Their Druzhina, and honouring her with the defence of Ealdormere.

So it is said, so it is done. We, Tristham and Anneke the Furious, King and Queen of Ealdormere hereby elevate Nika Dmitrieva doch' Zvezdina to Our Most Noble Order of the Mark this fourth day of October, Anno Societatis LX, at Huntsman's Harvest in Our Barony of Ben Dunfirth.

Illumination by Mistress Ana Yanka
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Fable inspirations: Russian Fairy Tales, trans. Norbert Guterman. 1945.

Vasilisa The Beautiful: Russian Fairy Tales, ed. Irina Zeleznova. 1966.

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Bell pg 11 <https://stock.adobe.com/>

Thank you to Duke Trumbrand, Chief Provider of Tea to the Office of the Chronicler.

The Tidings Official Newsletter for the Kingdom of Ealdormere

Boilerplate: A few things we're required to say...

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