



The White Birch

The Newsletter of the Shire of Rokeclif
May XLVI (2011)

Seneschal's Missive

Happy New Year, everyone. Yes, it's now the 46th year of the SCA's existence. Pretty soon we'll celebrate our golden anniversary. Doesn't seem like that long, does it?

We have two event reports (of sorts) in this issue. Bronislavá and I enjoyed Bardic Madness in Rapid City SD on the April 23d weekend. Bardic Madness consists of a series of "challenges" of many kinds. I've included two responses to the same challenge. Videos of some of the challenges may be viewed on the ShavaSue YouTube channel.

Of course, our big event was Games People Played here in Rokeclif. According to participants, it was a relaxing fun event. Several people reported learning new games. Check below for a few photos.

THL² Kudrun

Next Meetings

Monday, May 2— Research Day — LaCrosse Public Library

Monday, May 9 — A&S Night—Cybele's place

Monday, May 16 — Populace Meeting — Skokke Towers

We'll be meeting in parks this summer. Watch for details.

Upcoming Events

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| May 7 | Rumble in the Forest — Coille Stoirmeil (Wilton WI) |
| May 14 | NS Crown Tourney — Korsvag (Fargo ND) |
| May 21 | Burn, baby burn — Shattered Oak (Haugen WI) |
| May 28 | Schutzenfest — Nordskogen (Houston MN) |
| May 28 | Lamb to Loom — Turm an dem See (Random Lake WI) |
| June 4 | Mermaid's Retreat — Turm an dem See (Valders WI) |
| June 18 | Rose Tournament — Shattered Oak (Eau Claire WI) |
| June 25 | Border Skirmish — CAM (Kenosha WI) |

DISCLAIMER

The White Birch is a publication of the Shire of Rokeclif of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. It is not a corporate publication of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc., and does not delineate SCA policies. It's lucky when it gets information straight and spells words correctly.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION

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Minutes of the Populace Meeting

April 18, 2011 — Skokke Towers

Present: Cybele, Vettoria, Vitaliano, Alyssa, Bronislavá, Kudrun, Robert
Bronislavá called us to order.

OFFICER REPORTS were dispensed with in order to get down to the real business—the event we're putting on in a mere twelve days.

Things are coming along apace. The biggest glitch was the lack of a lunch provider. Cybele called neighboring groups, but no one was available to provide lunch. As a substitute, Vitaliano put together a list of places near site that could serve lunch. (There are MANY.)

SCA didn't fax the insurance document to Donna, so Vitaliano will deliver it.

Feast was divvied up among shire members. Vitaliano would make meats (two were tested at the meeting), Bronislavá would make roasted root vegetables, Kudrun would make bread, Robert would procure some fruits. A smaller beef roast will provide a pork alternative. We estimate 50 feasters.

There are two merchants registered.

Other issues discussed include handicap parking spaces, table rental, accurate site measuring, game tokens, eggs and markers. (Note — Robert is exempt from any future hard-boiled egg requests — at least until he gets the yolks off his ceiling.)

We ended the meeting by testing the pork dishes. Ideas for improvement were proffered.

The meeting ended in a storm of gluttony.... I mean, in the scientific testing of viands.



All this is moot, since the event is now history. We had almost 40 SCA people in attendance, and 15 guests from the Waldorf School. The school folks were very gracious, and many put on tabards and joined in the games. We did not meet expenses, but we may have made new friends.

A & S LIST

Kudrun – Still working on class for Bardic Madness.

Made rubber ducky chess set.

Bronislavá – Researched period games (egg-jousting!)

Cybele – Sang a song at Bluff Country Tale Spinners.

Working on presentation to be given in July on Bards and Music and Songs, Oh My!

Vitaliano – Testing feast recipes — pork roasts

Vettoria – Garb research—new book

Robert – Persona document—4 pages!

Pierre—Made beautiful Morris board.

Bardic Madness

Freydis (from Mistig Waetru), Elashava (from Jararvellir) and Kudrun met at Bronislava's house about 9AM on April 22 and headed west. Sustained by yummys from the Food Co-op, we met our tourism and bathroom needs at the Spam Museum, The Corn Palace, and Wall Drug. Almost exactly twelve hours later we arrived in Rapid City SD and fell into our beds. In the morning, we got an early enough stop that we took a quick trip into the Black Hills, meeting a herd of Bighorn Sheep.

Bardic Madness consists of a series of "challenges" of many kinds. There was a challenge for authentic pieces, for instrumental pieces, for puns and wordplay. The *Bard, Scribe, Illuminator* challenge required an illuminated manuscript of a piece to be created on a subject given in the morning. There were two sessions of classes as well. (Kudrun taught one on numbers, called *XLII*.)

The first challenge was the *Ensemble Tale*, in which a story was continued by each of the 8 participants as Kudrun pointed at them. Bronislava was patron for the next-to-last challenge, *Good Luck to the Barley Mow!* This brought out the drinking songs (since Bardic Madness turned 21 this year).

Both Kudrun and Bronislava participated in the *Word Salad* challenge. We received a list of 20 words that morning, and wrote a story or song using all of them. Our results are published here. Are we insane for driving over 1300 miles for an event? Sure! Why not? Would we do it again? Yes. May 21 — to Calontir!



The Challenge: Use these words in whatever form you want.

Wicked	Apprehend	Basket	Gloaming	Fortnight	Ring	Griffin
Ebony	Encroach	Platter	Wine	Tincture	Toast	Tower
Throng	Palimpsest	Whetstone	Braid	Snap	Whisper	Stairway

Kudrun's Word Salad

The **griffin** sat in the **ebony** tower, sharpening her claws on a **whetstone**. The **encroaching** trees **whispered** in the breeze of the **gloaming**. Her dinner of **wine** and **toast** lay ignored on a **platter** near the **stairway**. A feeling of **apprehension** — was it a **wicked** feeling? — no — just a bit of niggling worry.

In a **fortnight** her life would change in a **snap** — as she would end her childhood, and the cords of her life would begin a new **braid**. The **throng** of friends and family who had supported her in childhood would be left behind. The **ring** that marked her passage into adulthood lay in a **basket** of forest green **tincture**.

Her childhood was in its last chapter. It would never be forgotten, but would remain as a **palimpsest** upon which her new adulthood would be written.

Bronislavá's Word Salad

The Challenge: Use these words in whatever form you want.

Wicked	Apprehend	Basket	Gloaming	Fortnight	Ring	Griffin
Ebony	Encroach	Platter	Wine	Tincture	Toast	Tower
Throng	Palimpsest	Whetstone	Braid	Snap	Whisper	Stairway

There once was a baron who hatched a **wicked** plot. He forged a document that seemed to prove his childless neighbor and rival was guilty of treason, which he then arranged to be sent to the king. The king believed this document, and sent his guard to **apprehend** the rival. After his neighbor's execution, the baron obtained the forged document, intending at first to burn it. Instead, he found himself erasing the writing from it. In a panic, he placed the parchment in the **basket** of one of the king's laundresses and left for his own estate. He returned home just at the **gloaming** of the day, full of further plans. Having eliminated his rival, the baron began to quietly send his men to occupy and administer the lordless lands adjoining his own.

Barely a **fortnight** later, a noble young man and his sister came to the baron's home, claiming to be the cousins of the late rival, and his heirs. The young man offered a **ring** carved with a **griffin** as black as **ebony** as proof of his identity – and this was indeed the seal of the dead neighbor. “Why have you **encroached** upon our lands?” he asked the baron.

The baron replied, “I have done no such thing! I only sent my men to assist a people bereft of their lord, until the king could decide what is proper.” This was, of course, a lie, and did not convince the young man or his sister, but they could not prove their suspicions. The baron, thinking quickly and wanting to salvage the situation, continued, “I have three children of marriageable age – two sons and a daughter. I would be pleased, sir, to give you my daughter in marriage, and to have your sister marry my oldest son. After all, we are neighbors, and can benefit each other greatly.” The young man agreed to this proposal, and a great feast was held – **platters** full of food, and free-flowing **wine**.

The document was drawn up the next day, the finest inks in the richest **tinctures** being used.

That night, the baron's oldest son, somewhat inebriated after yet another feast with free-flowing **wine**, decided to **toast** his future bride from the top of the **tower**. A **throng** gathered below, laughing and calling words of encouragement. To their horror, he misjudged his step and fell to his death.

The stunned baron, retiring to his chamber, was astonished to find the marriage document on his bed. To his horror, other words began to appear behind the agreement – the very words the baron himself had written to rid himself of his rival. Then both sets of words faded, leaving only the following: “One son has met death. How many more for your crime?”

The baron realized with horror that somehow the parchment his scribe had used was the **palimpsest** he had hidden in the laundress's basket. He fell senseless to the floor. When he awoke, the only words to be seen were the words of the marriage agreement between the two young couples.

As the baron's son was being prepared for burial, his rival's cousins came to him, proposing that the younger son marry in his brother's place. The baron agreed, insisting that a completely new document be drawn up immediately, and the first one destroyed.

In the few days until his son's funeral, the baron became aware of **whispers** among his people – whispers of a curse on his family brought on by some great evil. He began to remove himself from company, terrified lest someone discover his deed. When he was seen, he carried with him a **whetstone** and dagger, constantly honing his blade, so great was his fear that someone would attack him.

The day before the double wedding was to take place, the baron's daughter was leaving her room to join her father in the hall. At the top of the stairs, her **braid** caught on a hook. She jerked her head to free herself, losing her balance in her haste. She fell down the stairs, her neck **snapping** as she went, to land dead at the bottom. Again, the grief-stricken baron retired to his chamber, only to find – again the marriage document. Again, his forged document appeared behind the newer words. Without knowledge or volition, the scribe had erased and reused the **palimpsest** yet again. A new message appeared.

“Two children have met death. Keep my lands and lose your sons. Admit your crime and save your son.”

Slowly, the baron left his room to return to the great hall.