

The Phoenix

The Barony of the Sacred Stone



February 2006 AS XI

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Barony of the Sacred Stone, SCA, Inc.
Kathryn Evans
4493 Leepers Street
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Unto the Populace

From the Baroness

Greetings to the populace of Sacred Stone!!

We are looking at a busy event season in front of us. I hope to see people at University, Ymir and other events. We are also preparing for our Novice Tourney/Investiture. Please talk this event up. It is going to be a big one and there should be something for everyone there.

We are also working on the War of the Wings event. The staff have really gone all out on their plans and are working at creating interest all over. We are working on some activities for the Barony to tie in with this event. There will be heraldic consultations at fighter practices and Arts and Science classes and events to help people prepare for the war. Keep an eye on the website for information on the upcoming activities. Lets take this challenge seriously and show everyone the wonders that we can do.

Thank you!
Kisaiya

From the Seneschal

Greetings Sacred Stone!

My only piece of business today concerns our pending polling. All of the envelopes are sealed and ready to be mailed, we merely lack labels from Milpitas, which we expect this week. Just remember the polling must be postmarked by February 20th for consideration by Their Highnesses.

Please don't forget the next Barony meeting is the 4th Sunday of the month in Baelfire Dunn at the high school.

As always if you have questions or concerns please contact me directly via phone or email.

In Service,

Robear

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From the Chronicler

Greetings all,

This month we have another wonderful article about archery technique from Lord Christophe of Gray. We also have an article submitted by the mysterious Jonas Doeus, Scribe Extraordinaire, about the early history of the baronies of Sacred Stone and Windmaster's Hill. This is the second installment in a series of stories that will be leading up to the War of the Wings in October. Be sure to check out the website, www.warofthewings.com, to read all of the stories as they are released.

Always in service to the arts,

Katerina

From the Castellan

Greetings to the people of Sacred Stone,

This, I hope to do something different. I wish to have a New Comer's point at each event. My hope is to have a New Comer's Point c lose to Troll. I will need to have people man these along with me.

Achbar

From the Exchequer

Reimbursements and Cash Advances

Exchequer Letter Submitted for the Phoenix

Lady Lidia de Ragusa

Lydia Towery

January 2006

Greetings to the Populace of the Barony of the Sacred Stone!

With the New Year, I hope to improve processes and procedures for handling Baronial financial matters.

The most straight-forward method for paying for approved Baronial expenditures is through reimbursement with receipts. Remember though, finding the person with the checkbook is not necessarily a guarantee for an immediate reimbursement, since all checks must be completely filled out, and signed by TWO signatories, usually the Seneschal and the Exchequer.

However, in circumstances where it may be unrealistic for someone, like an event head cook, to forward hundreds of dollars for feast ingredients, a cash advance may be the solution. The Exchequer's Handbook includes a Cash Advance Request Form, where estimated and actual expenses can be recorded and reconciled.

As always, if you have any questions about reimbursements, cash advances, or any other Exchequer matters, please do not hesitate to contact me.

YIS,

Lady Lidia de Ragusa

Exchequer, Barony of the Sacred Stone



The Phoenix.

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History of the Lands of Sacred Stone and Windmasters' Hill: The Early Years.

NOTE: *This tale of the earliest origins of the peopled lands of Sacred Stone and Windmasters' Hill was found in ancient hieroglyphic form, carved into the walls of a well preserved water closet found buried under a gas station in unclaimed lands between the two Baronies. The original scribe of the tales will never be known, and the translation is certainly an imperfect one. In fact, many contemporary scribes who have looked at this translation have found it to be in error in more than one passage. To scribes who would differ with my translation offered below, I have only this to say; clear up your own passages, and leave mine alone.*

Jonas Doeus, Scribe extraordinaire

In the days of long gone by, before there were organized kingdoms in the known world, most of the lands were peopled by nomadic and semi nomadic tribesmen. They wandered far and wide across the forested woodlands of what would one day be called the Northern Carolinas. Life was hard but simple, and oftentimes the tribes would come across each other in the forests and fields. Sometimes these encounters led to peaceful trading and shared festivities. At other times, battle was joined and blood was shed.

While there were many tribes of all shapes and sizes that wandered the land, there were two that distinguished themselves for their size in numbers and their fierceness in battle. One of these tribes roamed the central parts of the Northern Carolinas. It is said that in those days they were led by a noble warrior named Thorgrimvaldrgar Windbreaker, and that they called themselves, simply enough, 'Windbreakers.' They were a people who worshipped the forces of the wind and air. They were well known for their courage in battle and the skill of their artisans. They were sought far and wide as allies, and struck fear into the hearts of those who opposed them.

A man named Phillipus the Flaming One led the other tribe, which commanded the lands west of the Windbreaker tribe. Much like the Windbreakers, they were a tribe known for their ferocity in battle. They were also a talented people, and the work of their artisans fetched a goodly sum at every market day. In contrast to their neighboring tribe, they thought of fire as the all-encompassing element, and they worshipped flame most righteously and with all piety. They called themselves simply the 'Flaming Ones'.

Over the course of many, many years these tribes encountered each other frequently. While most of the encounters ended peacefully in an exchange of goods and such, there were occasional battles fought. Hard were the battles and many were the wounded and slain when such a battle occurred, for these were two tribes who did not know the meaning of the word surrender.

(Of course, literacy rates being what they were back then, it's likely that they also did not know the meanings of the words hygiene, manners or deodorant either. But I digress.)

It came to pass that one day Phillipus and Thorgrimvaldrgar were negotiating a trade between their tribes over some lovely glassware in a quiet clearing when an argument arose between them. Phillipus insisted that fire was the critical element in the making of fine glassware. Because his people worshipped fire, they made the best glassware.

"No one creates beauty like a Flaming One," he said, and because of this he demanded that his people's wares be counted as being of extra value.

Thorgrimvaldrgar disputed this . . . after all, it was called Glassblowing, not glass burning or glass heating, and therefore it was the air and wind which made the finest forms in glass and no one, he said, could blow like a Windbreaker. It was his people's wares, then, that deserved special value.

The argument grew loud and angry, and ended with the two men declaring war. They vowed to meet on the morning after the next full moon with all of their assembled might and settle once and for all whose tribe was the greatest.

The two leaders returned to their tribes and told them to prepare for the upcoming battle, which would take place in less than two weeks time.

Thorgrimvaldrgar went to the tribal wise woman and begged her to tell him if there were any preparations he could make to insure victory for his people. She warned him that an all out battle of all the warriors of both tribes would end in disaster for both. So many warriors would be dead or wounded that neighboring smaller tribes would have an easy time moving into both lands. She warned that he absolutely must find a means of giving his tribe a significant upper hand in the upcoming battle. But she herself could think of no such weapon or strategy. She therefore directed him to go to the top of the highest

peak in the tribal lands and ask the winds for guidance.

It must be remembered that the Windbreaker tribe in no way cornered the market on old wise women. (*In fact, it seems like you could hardly shake a stick without hitting one back then*). Phillipus, who was concerned for his tribe, had also sought the advice of one. She had also given dire warnings of doom and directed him to the top of a tall peak, where he was to light a great fire and ask the powers of flame for direction.

Both men set off immediately to do as they had been told.

It came to pass that Thorgrimrvaldrgar went to the top of the highest peak in Windbreaker lands and sat in deep thought. He faced each of the cardinal directions in turn, beginning with the north. Each direction he faced he asked for help in the upcoming battle. After a day and a night of doing this he still had no sign of answer, so he made to leave. Suddenly a great wind blew him back to the ground. Before he could stand back up there appeared before him a magnificent beast. It was taller than any steed he had seen, but with wings of great glittering expanse and silvery feathers. Its body was feline in nature, and it was so indescribably beautiful that tears came to the old chief's eyes. His people had long spoken of this beast in legend . . . the Kittyhawk . . . and yet never had anyone laid eyes on it.

"You have led my people well, Thorgrimrvaldrgar," said the glorious beast in a voice that the old chief heard clearly, though no sound issued forth from the mouth of the Kittyhawk. "And next week you shall lead them to victory once again. My powers over wind and air will carry the day for you, and you shall be king of lands twice over and you shall name them in my honor and settle your people into them and rule over them in my name for many years to come. Will you now do this for me?"

The old chief crawled up to his knees and bent low to the ground.

"Indeed," he said, "I shall lead my people in your name and when victory is ours we shall settle into our new lands and we shall name them for you, oh spirit who can outpace any wind, and we shall call the land Windpasser's Gap, and we shall . . ."

"Err, umm," said the Kittyhawk.

"Yes, oh great one?"

"I'm not in love with the name, let's think of another one," said the majestic beast.

"How about Windygas Pass?"

"Try again . . ."

"Windy Chasm?"

"Definitely not!"

"Breezy Bottom?"

"Don't you dare!"

This continued on for awhile before the name of Windmasters' Hill was finally chosen.

"It is decided!" growled the Kittyhawk in a voice like thunder. "Now go forth and prepare the people of Windmasters' Hill for battle!"

Meanwhile, Phillipus had been on a faraway hilltop fire gazing for many hours, hoping to receive some guidance from on high. He was about to despair when he was suddenly bathed in the warming glow of a beautiful bird. Red and orange and yellow were its colors, but also the others of the rainbow, and as he watched it he noted that it was entirely wreathed in flames, and yet he himself felt in no way threatened by it. Far from it, its radiant beauty left him speechless and wanting only to serve this beautiful creature, this Phoenix of which his people had long spoken in quiet whispers.

"Phillipus, you have long been a good servant of the fire and a good servant of the phoenix. You have led my people as best as you can, and I am most pleased. Do not despair! My flames and my fire will lead your people to victory against your enemies. You shall conquer them and settle their lands and your own. You shall be Lord of these lands and you shall name them for the very holy place upon which your feet now stand!"

Phillipus looked down at his feet.

"You want me to name your land Really Big Honkin' Rock?"

"PHILLIPUS! This is Holy Land and needs to be named as such!"

"ER . . . Holy Really Big Honkin' Rock then?"

Again, some discussion ensued, but eventually, as you well know, the noble name of Sacred Stone was picked from among the many alternative names.

"Go Forth, then," cried the Phoenix, "And tell your people of Sacred Stone that now they fight for the glory of the flame and the Phoenix!"

And it came to pass that on the agreed upon morning the tribes assembled upon opposite sides of a great field. Awesome were the forces that each tribe had gathered, and crows flew overhead, eagerly awaiting the carnage that would no

doubt ensue.

Lines were assembled. Shields were raised high. Battle horns called out, and the two sides charged each other.

The Kittyhawk was the first of the mythical creatures to show his powers in the battle. The arrows of his Windmasters Archers, guided on by the winds, flew unerringly to their marks. The arrows of the warriors of sacred stone were blown off course as if they were pages on the breeze.

But the Phoenix, of course, would not let this go unanswered, and as the battle lines met the shield wall of Windmasters Hill was torn asunder by pillars of flame that erupted from the very ground upon which the warriors stood.

This was disconcerting, to say the least, and mass chaos began to run rampant up and down the field. Hundreds died, the field was scorched and trees were blown down by the massive air and fire assaults.

It did not take long for the warriors and mythical creatures on both sides to realize that this war, if left to go to its end, would end only with the destruction of both tribes. (*This was much as the old wise women in both tribes had foretold . . . just goes to show . . . always trust a wise woman, I guess*). And so, as one, the Kittyhawk and the Phoenix both called for their respective tribes to withdraw from battle. The armies obeyed, and returned to their sides of the field to glower at each other and shout occasional rude words.

The Phoenix then called out to Phillipus to come with him to the middle of the field bearing the flag of parley. Seeing this, the Kittyhawk flew out with Thorgrimvaldrgar in tow.

Great was the negotiation that took place on that ancient day. We will never know all that was said between the two chiefs and the two Incredible Beasts. Certainly both sides agreed that the other was too powerful to vanquish. While there were growls (as well as a couple of angry squawks and meows), there were friendly words passed as well. The Kittyhawk admitted to the Phoenix that he was actually kind of fond of fire. You couldn't have smores without fire, after all. And the Phoenix agreed that there was little in life that was more pleasant than a nice cool breeze on a hot day, especially if you were wearing a kilt, which of course the Phoenix was not.

Both sides agreed to respect each other's lands and to attempt to live in peace. Perhaps most importantly, they agreed that when confronted by a common enemy they would fight side by side. Where arguments did pop up (as both sides agreed was inevitable) they would be determined without the interference of the Phoenix or the Kittyhawk, who would only act as advisors and referees for their respective sides.

And so an agreement for the ages was made.

Let peace be ever attainable!

Long live the peoples of Sacred Stone and of Windmasters' Hill!

May the Kittyhawk and the Phoenix ever remain . . .?

(Here ends the translation, as the inscription suffered water damage here and was unreadable)

And so it has been for many, many years, through the development of kingdoms and the forming of Baronies. Windmasters' Hill and Sacred Stone, both Great Baronies, still attempt to live in peace where possible. But where argument is great, war will happen. When it happens between the peoples of Windmasters' Hill and Sacred Stone then great indeed shall be the carnage that ensues. Each of you must choose a side in this upcoming War of the Wings and pray that valor and mercy is practiced by both sides in equal measure. Otherwise, all of our lives may well be doomed.

Yours in service,

Jonas Doeus, Scribe extraordinaire.





Proper Technique

Part 1

In this next series of articles I'm going to discuss each aspect of good archery technique. Remember, the secret to good shooting is consistency, doing the same thing every time.

Let's begin with how to stand, the stance. Imagine a line going straight from your position to the target. With the closed stance the toes of each foot are touching this line and perpendicular to it. With the open stance your front foot is moved back off this perpendicular line and at a slight angle to it. This causes a slight twist in your upper body

which often manifests holding the draw with your arms and not your back muscles. The last stance I recommend is a modified open stance. Your front foot points at the target. Your back foot is perpendicular to the line to the target. Think more open than the open stance.

The closed stance is very good to start with as it forces a bone on bone alignment of bow hand, arm, and shoulder. As you draw the bow, pop your chest out. This forces you to hold the draw with your back muscles. When we first start out most of us just use our arms to hold the draw and this causes bow hand shake. With the open stances the upper body has a slight twist to it. While the open stance is great for quick shots and the instinctive shooting technique (future article) due to the upper body twist it tends to cause us to hold the draw more with our arms. Remember, pop your chest out.

How do you hold the bow? Point your bow hand index finger at the target. While holding your hand out, have someone else place the bow in your hand. The bow center line should be lined up with the Y webbing between your index finger and thumb. Whether you hold your bow vertical or slightly canted to one side is again a personal choice. Most recurve bows work best held vertically. Most long bows work best with a slight cant to them. Here's the logic: If your bow uses an arrow rest as you rotate the bow around center you are rotating the point of aim/arrow point off target center. If you shoot off the shelf of your bow as you rotate the bow the point of aim remains centered on the target. Try it. Point your index finger at a target. Rotate your arm. Point of aim remains constant. Now raise your thumb of the extended "bow" hand. Using the top of your thumb as the aiming point, rotate your arm. See how the aiming point moves?

When you draw the bow your objective is to have the bow hand, bow arm, draw hand, and draw arm all in a straight line with the arrow on the bow. Lots of times we hold our draw elbow too high or out away from our bodies.

To practice this anywhere, pick out a target. Quickly raise your bow hand and point your index finger at the target. As you do this, bring your draw hand to your anchor point. If you raise the thumb of your draw hand you now have two sights, index finger and draw hand thumb top. Practice bringing these rapidly into alignment, "sighting" on the target.

More technique pointers next time. Until then, shoot straight.....

Christophe of Grey

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