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Azure, on a pale vert fimbriated  
between two laurel wreaths a sword Or

# Fort Knights

THE SHIRE OF CAER ADAMANT NEWSLETTER

*DECEMBER/JANUARY 2007/2008*

## DECEMBER OFFICER REPORTS:

**FROM THE SENESCHAL:** LADY HEDEWIGIS IS OFFICIAL .

**FROM THE EXCHEQUER:** WE HAVE \$4973.47 IN THE BANK. NO CHANGE FROM LAST MONTH.

**FROM THE CHATELAINE:** DEMO FOR FIRST NIGHT DOVER WON'T BE DONE THIS YEAR. PERHAPS IN 2008. LOOKING FOR DEPUTIES FOR EACH COUNTY TO HELP SERVE NEWCOMERS IN EACH COUNTY.

**FROM THE ARCHERY CAPTAIN:** LORD LEWIN IS RUNNING THE WINTER ARCHERY CHALLENGE AT THE SMYRNA OCEAN PRO ARCHERY CENTER. OVER 100 GENTLES HAVE SO FAR ATTENDED. OF THAT NUMBER, 10 HAVE BEEN SHIRE MEMBERS. DAYS WILL CHANGE TO SATURDAYS IN NEAR FUTURE.

**FROM THE KNIGHT MARSHALL:** WE ARE CURRENTLY LOOKING FOR INDOOR SPACE TO HOST WINTER INDOOR PRACTICES.

**FROM THE MISTRESS OF ARTS AND SCIENCES:** REPORT HAS BEEN SUBMITTED, AND SHE WAS GRANTED "OFFICIAL" STATUS. SHE NOW HAS TWO DEPUTIES TO HELP ASSIST HER. SHE SUBMITTED AN INTEREST SURVEY TO THE ASSEMBLED POPULACE TO GET AN IDEA OF WHAT KIND OF INTERESTS THERE ARE IN THE SHIRE.

**FROM THE HERALD:** WAS AWARDED "OFFICIAL" STATUS. REPORT IS DUE.

**FROM THE CHRONICLER:** LEARNING PRVIOUS NEWSLETTER SOFTWARE/FORMATS. REPORT DUE SOON.

## OLD BUSINESS:

--NO NEW DEMOS SCHEDULED...BUT LOOKING!

--NO NEW ACTIVITIES.....BUT LOOKING!

--SUNDAY A&S NIGHT IS STILL GOING ON.

--DANCE CLASS IS STILL GOING ON. 1<sup>ST</sup> AND 3<sup>RD</sup> TUESDAYS, 7-8:30 AT KENNETT'S SQUARE.

CONTACT LORD PADRAIG FOR MORE INFO.

--SOUTHERN SHIRE PROPOSAL, WE WERE ASKED IF WE WOULD RE-CONSIDER SPONSORING THE SOUTHERN SHORE SHIRE PROPOSAL. IT WAS DETERMINED THAT THE OPINIONS OF THE SHIRE OFFICERS WOULD BE HEARD.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

--LADY SUSANNA WILL SUBMIT A BID PROPOSAL TO AUTOCRAT THIS YEARS SWAMP THING EVENT. THE THEME WOULD BE "ROBIN WHO?".

--BARON ADOLPHUS WILL LOOK INTO AQUIRING A CANVAS DINING FLY, SIMILAR TO WHAT HE'S SEEN AT THE ICOD ENCAMPMENT.

--LADY CATRINE HAS ASKED FOR EVERYONE TO LOOK FOR A SITE TO HOST THE 2009 KINGDOM CRUSADES EVENT. SHE HAS LOOKED INTO THE DELAWARE STATE FAIRGROUNDS. THIS IS ONGOING.

--ST. GEORGES CIVIC CENTER HAS APPROACHED US IN ORDER TO DO A RENN. FAIRE IN THE ST. GEORGES AREA. THEY WERE LOOKING TO DO THIS IN THE OCTOBER TIMEFRAME.

--BARON ADOLPHUS HAS POSED IF WE SHOULD LOOK AT OUR PENDING SEPARATION. AFTER SOME DISCUSSION, IT WAS DETERMINED TO LET THE PROCESS PROCEED FOR NOW.

### **PRESENT AT THE MEETING:**

NINA, SUSANNA, CATRINE, LEWIN, MARK IV, SARA, HEDEWIGIS, PADRAIG, ALEXANDER, MAGDELENA, MALCOLM

### **NEXT SHIRE BUSINESS MEETING:**

*TUESDAY, JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup> AT THE DOVER LIBRARY, IN DOVER.*

### **UPCOMING SHIRE BUSINESS MEETINGS:**

*THURSDAY, FEBUARY 21<sup>ST</sup> AT THE CORBITT CALLOWAY LIBRARY, IN ODESSA.*

*SUNDAY, MARCH 16<sup>TH</sup> IN SUSSEX COUNTY, LOOKING FOR A LOCATION.*

## ***CHRISTMAS-AN ANCIENT HOLIDAY***

THE MIDDLE OF WINTER HAS BEEN A TIME OF CELEBRATION FOR PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD FOR CENTURIES. CENTURIES BEFORE THE ARIVAL OF THE MAN NAMED JESUS, EARLY EUROPEANS CELEBRATED

LIGHT AND BIRTH IN THE DARKEST DAYS OF WINTER. MANY CELEBRATED THE WINTER SOLSTICE, WHEN THE WORST DAYS OF WINTER WERE BEHIND THEM.

IN SCANDINAVIA, THE NORSE CELEBRATED YULE FROM DECEMBER 21<sup>ST</sup>, THE WINTER SOLSTICE, TO JANUARY. IN CELEBRATION FOR THE RETURN OF THE SUN, FATHERS AND THEIR SON'S WOULD BRING HOME LARGE TREE LOGS WHICH THEY'D SET AFLAME. THE PEOPLE WOULD FEAST UNTIL THE LOG BURNED OUT, WHICH COULD TAKE AS MANY AS TWELVE DAYS. THE NORSE BELIEVED THAT EACH SPARK THAT ROSE FROM THE FIRE REPRESENTED A NEW PIG OR CALF THAT WOULD BE BORN DURING THE UPCOMING YEAR.

THE END OF DECEMBER WAS THE PERFECT TIME FOR CELEBRATION IN MOST AREAS OF EUROPE. THAT TIME OF THE YEAR, FARM ANIMALS WERE OFTEN SLAUGHTERED SO THAT THEY WOULDN'T HAVE TO BE FED DURING THE WINTER. FOR MANY, IT WAS THE ONLY TIME OF THE YEAR THAT PEOPLE HAD FRESH MEAT. IN ADDITION, MOST WINE AND BEER MADE DURING THE YEAR HAD FERMENTED AND WAS READY FOR DRINKING.

IN GERMANY, MANY PEOPLE WORSHIPED THE PAGAN GOD ODIN DURING THE MID WINTER HOLIDAY. IT WAS BELIEVED THAT DURING THIS TIME ODIN WOULD TAKE FLIGHT AND GO AMONGST HIS PEOPLE AND DECIDE WHO WOULD SURVIVE AND WHO WOULD PERISH DURING THE UPCOMING YEAR. BECAUSE OF THIS, MANY PEOPLE CHOSE TO REMAIN INDOORS.

## CHRISTMAS HISTORY

### CHRISTMAS BEGINS

NO ONE KNOWS THE EXACT DAY JESUS WAS BORN. AT THE TIME HE LIVED, PEOPLE DIDN'T RECORD THE DATE SOMEONE WAS BORN. THE DATE SOMEONE DIED WAS THE ONLY DATE THAT PEOPLE REMEMBERED. BIRTHDAYS WEREN'T RECORDED NOR WERE THEY CELEBRATED.

IT WASN'T UNTIL THE 320'S THAT THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH DECIDED THEY SHOULD PICK A DATE TO CELEBRATE THE BIRTH OF JESUS. THEY DIDN'T HAVE A FESTIVAL IN DECEMBER, SO THEY CHOSE THE 25<sup>TH</sup> AS THE DAY. THEY WANTED THE HOLIDAY TO BE A PRAYERFUL MASS, SO THEY CALLED IT "CHRIST'S MASS". IN 337, THE NEW HOLIDAY RECEIVED A HUGE BOOST, WHEN THE ROMAN EMPEROR CONSTANTINE WAS BAPTISED AND CHRISTIANITY BECAME THE OFFICIAL STATE RELIGION.

THE FIRST YEAR WE KNOW CHRISTMAS WAS CELEBRATED ON DECEMBER 25<sup>TH</sup> WAS IN 352. SINCE THAT DAY, IT HAS BEEN THE MOST HOLY DAY OF THE YEAR FOR ALL CHRISTIANS.

### CHRISTMAS CAROLS

THERE WERE ANCIENT CHRISTMAS CAROLS DATING BACK TO THE 4<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY. THERE WERE ALSO OTHER SONGS THAT PRAISED THE WINTER SEASON LONG BEFORE THAT. DURING THE 12<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY, ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI INCLUDED CHRISTMAS CAROLS IN CHURCH SERVICES. MONKS COMPOSED CHRISTMAS THEMED MUSIC DURING THE MIDDLE AGES. ALL OF THESE CAROLS WERE BASED ON THE BIBLE, AND WERE USED FOR RELIGIOUS SERVICES ONLY.

EVENTUALLY, LIGHTER, MORE JOYFUL CHRISTMAS CAROLS WERE WRITTEN. HOWEVER, ALL CHRISTMAS MUSIC WAS BANNED IN ENGLAND BETWEEN 1649 AND 1660. OLIVER CROMWELL FELT CHRISTMAS SHOULD BE A SOLEMN DAY. WHEN PROTESTANTS LEFT ENGLAND FOR THE NEW WORLD, THEY BROUGHT THEIR CHRISTMAS CAROLS WITH THEM. IN 1649, JOHN DE BREBEUR WROTE THE FIRST AMERICAN CHRISTMAS CAROL CALLED "JESUS IS BORN".

## **CHRISTMAS TREES**

EVERYONE AGREES THE GERMANS CREATED THE CHRISTMAS TREE TRADITION. IT'S BELIEVED THE FIRST CHRISTMAS TREE CAME INTO BEING DURING THE FIRST HALF OF THE 700'S. A LEGEND SAYS A BRITISH MONK WAS GIVING A SERMON ABOUT THE NATIVITY TO A TRIBE OF GERMANIC DRUIDS AND FELLED AN OAK TREE TO SHOW IT WASN'T SACRED. WHEN THE OAK FAILED TO CRUSH A SMALL FIR TREE THAT LAY BELOW THE OAK, IT WAS CALLED A MIRACLE AND HE NAMED THE TREE "THE TREE OF THE CHRIST CHILD". CHRISTMAS WAS THEN CELEBRATED IN GERMANY BY PLANTING FIR TREES.

WE DEFINITELY KNOW CHRISTMAS TREES WERE DECORATED INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE HOUSE DURING THE 1500'S IN GERMANY. THERE WAS A FORREST ORDINANCE DATED 1561 THAT SAYS "NO BURGHER SHALL HAVE FOR CHRISTMAS MORE THAN ONE BUSH OF MORE THAN EIGHT SHOES LENGTH". THE DECORATIONS AT THAT TIME INCLUDED APPLES, COOKIES, AND CANDY.

## **CHRISTMAS TREE DECORATIONS**

THE FIRST CHRISTMAS TREE DECORATIONS WERE STRICTLY EDIBLE. COOKIES, CANDY, LITTLE CAKES AND APPLES WERE HUNG ON TREES TO BE HAPPILY EATEN AFTER CHRISTMAS. THE FIRST NON-EDIBLE ORNAMENTS WERE INTRODUCED IN THE LATE 1500'S WHEN MARTIN LUTHER DECIDED TO ADD CANDLES. THIS IMMEDIATELY BECAME THE NEW TRADITION DESPITE THE FIRE HAZARD. A BUCKET OF WATER WAS CUSTOMARILY KEPT NEXT TO THE TREE AND PEOPLE SIMPLY HOPED FOR THE BEST.

## **DECEMBER 25<sup>TH</sup> HISTORY**

**0352**—FIRST DEFINATE DATE CHRISTMAS WAS CELEBRATED ON DECEMBER 25<sup>TH</sup>.

**0597**---ENGLAND ADOPTS JULIAN CALENDAR

**0800**---POPE LEO III CROWNS CHARLEMAGNE ROMAN EMPEROR

**1066**---WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR CROWNED KING OF ENGLAND

**1223**---ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI ASSEMBLES THE FIRST NATIVITY SCENE

**1492**---COLUMBUS' SHIP SANTA MARIA DOCKS IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

# Twelfth Night History

A major January holiday was Twelfth Night, which celebrated the eve of Epiphany and the end of the twelve days of the Christmas holiday season. Twelfth Night observances were ritual contests between good and evil. For instance, star-led Magi in dramas outsmarting wicked King Herod to find the Christ Child in his manger were performed. Traditional country actors known as mummers in England, performed St. George and the Dragon plays in which the Saint overcomes an evil knight. Team games such as Oranges and Lemons ended with a tug-of-war between representatives of Winter and Spring. The triumphant new season became the necessary winner.

Rites involving food also assured a bountiful rebirth of the land after it's winter deadness. Wassailing toasts of spiced and herbed ales and wines were drunk and offered to the trees. Wassailing fruit trees in country orchards or symbolically in a hall, was accompanied by loud, jubilant, stamping dances such as the ox-horn rounds. Revelers adorned with ox-horned headdresses joyously circled the wassail tree, their earth-pounding, ankle-belled feet rhythmically signaling the awakening of Spring. Also derived from rural fertility practices were Twelfth Night bonfires, often rings of twelve small fires set around a larger one in grain fields, originally to stimulate harvests, or created indoors by circles of twelve candles centered by a thirteenth. Christianized, these flames became the twelve days of Christmas or the twelve Apostles, and the thirteenth representing the Virgin Mary or Christ. At the Twelfth Night High Table, honored guests were the *King and Queen of the Bean*. A tradition involving baking twelve cakes with a bean and a pea baked inside. Whomever discovered the bean and pea became the "King and Queen of the Bean" for the rest of the celebration. In castles, instead of a bean and pea, a gold, porcelain, or jeweled favor was baked into the Twelfth Night cake. Then it was called the *King's Cake*.

## UPCOMING KINGDOM EVENTS:

JANUARY 19<sup>TH</sup>  
FEBRUARY 16<sup>TH</sup>  
FEBRUARY 23<sup>RD</sup>

BELLRINGERS  
WINTER BRAWL  
NOISEMAKERS SCHOLA

BARONY OF CARILLION  
BARONY OF BHAKAIL  
IVYEINRUST

## REGULAR SHIRE EVENTS:

### **Period Gaming (A&S social, garb encouraged)**

1st Sunday 5:00 p.m. at Lady Hedewigis', Hockessin (see "Directions" for address)

Contact Lady Hedewigis 302.239.9787

Focus on Games of the Middle Ages. Favorites include Bocce, Tarot and Astronomical Tables. Light refreshments are available.

This evening gathering is open to all. A&S projects are welcomed as well as friendly social interaction.

### **A&S Evening -- formerly known as Embroidery Night (A&S<sup>†</sup>)**

2nd Monday at Lady Hedewigis' (320.239.9787) 7:00 p.m.

(see "Directions" for addresses)

An opportunity to work on various A&S projects in good company. Trying a new stitch? Need help marking a hem? Need tasters for your new recipe? Light refreshments are available.

### **Winter Challenge (Archery)(martial activity)**

November 4th and 18th

December 2nd and 16th

Time: 3pm-5pm but mind you YOU NEED TO BE THERE NO LATER THAN 4pm!! takes approx hour to shoot.

Location: Ocean Pro Outfitters 2461 S Dupont Blvd, Smyrna, DE 19977

Contact [Lewin de partone](#) for further information 302-465-0651

## **SHIRE OFFICERS:**

**SENESCHAL: LADY HEDEWIGIS OCKENFUS**

**DEPUTY SENESCHAL: VACANT**

**MISTRESS OF ARTS AND SCIENCES: MISTRESS SARAH THE LYMNER**

**KNIGHT MARSHALL: LORD KREY MACLEOD**

**ARCHERY CAPTAIN: LORD PADRAIG O'GEALAGAN**  
**CHATELAINE: LADY MAGDELENA THE MIGRANT**  
**HERALD: LORD ALEXANDER MACBLYKROSE**  
**EXCHEQUER: LADY SARA**  
**WEB MISTRESS: LADY WENDE BROWN**  
**CHRONICLER: LORD MALCOLM MACLEOD**

## **Fort Knights Newsletter**

c/o Neal Griffin  
2055 Andrews Lake Rd.  
Felton, Delaware 19943