

The Blue Strand

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER



Julia of the Ravens with the scoop: Blythe Venell seen suggesting to Monicans an alliance with the College of Passalaqua against the various Baronies! Photos by Julia of the Ravens.

Scandal on the High Tides

Certain baronial champion taking their duties too... “blythely”, reports say

— JOANNA OF BROADWOOD

The Blue Strand was horrified to hear this week, from multiple sources, that the Baronial Rapier Champion, Blythe Venell, was seen suggesting to Monicans an alliance with the College of Passalaqua against the Barony during court.

As many of you would know, our rainy-weather friends over in Stormhold have been having a disagreement over the ownership of the shoreline with the Barony of Ynys Fawr for the past several years. Since the land on the shoreline waxes and wanes with the tide, it was especially difficult to agree where the boundary precisely lies.

This year, the College of Passalaqua, from the sunny north, voyaged down to our neck of the woods. During court, they suggested that if Ynys Fawr and Stormhold could not agree, that the tideline could be held in custody of their college!

This caused a massive uproar and a great deal of shock amongst our neighbours – but more concerningly,

our Baronial Rapier Champion instantly took to the Monicans and Passalaquans to pledge support.

When directly asked for a comment, she stated “I have made it known I am buyable. I could be made to change [my stance].” Egad!!!

With Blythe, our Champion once hailed by the entire Barony and appointed by the Baron, now openly siding with the Barony's enemies, the Barony now faces a crisis of trust. Many are questioning who could even be considered trustworthy. Others are questioning precisely how much Blythe can be bought for, and if they could afford it.

In these concerning times, *The Blue Strand* would like to caution Monicans and any would be Krae Glas turncoats from supporting the Passalaquans. Our seneschal, Rúna said it best –

“The renowned war-like College of Passalaqua wishes to...” *checks notes* “... help broker peace?!”

WHAT'S ON?

March Activities

- ☞ Thursday 5th March – Fibre Guild Meetup + Fighter Training
- ☞ Saturday 7th March – Chess Challenge
- ☞ Sunday 8th – Monday 9th March – Baron's Workshop
- ☞ Thursday 12th March – Fighter Training + A&S
- ☞ Saturday 14th March – Crafthall (Ancient Worlds Collegium) + Potluck
- ☞ Sunday 15th March – Stormhold Archery Championship
- ☞ Tuesday 17th March – Council Meeting
- ☞ Thursday 19th March – Fighter Training + A&S
- ☞ Thursday 26th March – Fighter Training + A&S

More information:

<https://kraeglas.lochac.sca.org/>

Overheard:

Quotes from the Barony and Beyond

“I’m here to document nonsense, not stop it” – *Julia of the Ravens*

“I came here to look at weaving, not DIRT, you smutty collegians!” – *Fibre Guild attendee*

“I don’t want to be responsible for taking down half the fighters! Well... I mean, I DO, but not like that!” – *Robert de Mar, on why he is skipping fighter training while Julia is sick*

“What is a herald but a miserable pile of blazon?” – *Nest Brenhowel*

Heard someone say something? Got permission to quote them? Send in any quotes to joannabraidwood@gmail.com



Blythe Venell became the Baronial Rapier Champion earlier this year (A.S. 60), in November. At the time, Julia interviewed her, and below is what she said. Photo by Julia of the Ravens.

Baronial Champion Interview

Previously unpublished words from Blythe Venell

— JULIA OF THE RAVENS,
WITH BLYTHE VENELL

Last year, long before this scandal broke, I interviewed the then brand new Rapier Champion, Blythe Venell. Back then she seemed to embody every aspect of what a Baronial Champion should be. I am utterly blindsided – blindsided, I say! – by these revelations!!!!!!!!!!!!

How long have you been in the SCA?
A year as of October!

How did you get started?

At my first event - Dirty A&S hosted by Stormhold last year - I talked to Rúna about fighting and she mentioned rapier after I noted that due to my injury I would be unable to do heavy. From there I googled and asked at few Krae Glas events and someone suggested to me searching styles and the school of historical fencing.

What do you love most about rapier?
I love fighting with a sword.

What advice would you give for folks interested in starting rapier?

The advice I was given was to pick a style by watching other people fighting. That's how I fell in love with Spanish. So - google the different styles Spanish, Italian, English, French, etc. and choose one and learn the fundamentals. I would also recommend going to a HEMA class or few. Also practice. Practice holding the sword, your footwork, everything.

What is your favourite rapier style?

My personal favourite style of rapier is a cup hilt. Although it may be heavier than a swept hilt it provides far more confidence in its protection so that I do not need to worry about my opponent's blade slipping though my hilt. I can rely on this to deflect attacks on my hand much of the time.

My personal favourite technique for rapier is destreza/Spanish. It is focused, taking a scientific approach to fencing. An attempt to have the mathematically strongest position.

Who are the College of Passalacqua?

In case you were wondering...

— JOANNA OF BREADWOOD

The name on everyone's lips since their shocking declaration of ownership over the high tide lands – just *who* are the College of Passalacqua?

The College of Passalacqua are a new college (created circa A.S. 58) located within the lands of the Barony of Saint-Florian-de-la-riviere. Their Seneschal's name is Lord Alexander Scipio Valerius (right, photo by Julia of the Ravens). They have distinguished themselves over the last two years for a notably strong heavy fighting culture, being mercenaries for hire on more than one occasion and shenanigans.



Poetry Corner: High Tide War A.S. 60

— JOANNA OF BROADWOOD

Sunny Passalacqua, it stands by
the fray
Grey, grey, grey in Stormhold
They've come to the battle to
seize the bay
Rain, rain, rainy and cold.

The Baronies're fighting, they've
no recompense
Grey, grey, grey in Stormhold
Each side calls for assistance
to make their defence
Rain, rain, rainy and cold.

Passalacqua, they've invented a
solution most odd
Grey, grey, grey in Stormhold
That the high tide should be
THEIRS! And they've brought a
whole SQUAD!
Rain, rain, rainy and cold.

They've left their warm beaches
and bright sunny sky
Grey, grey, grey in Stormhold
To fight where only pebbles and
bitter winds lie
Rain, rain, rainy and cold.

What could they be wanting
with a seashore so grim
Grey, grey, grey in Stormhold
When their home already has
so many places to swim?
Rain, rain, rainy and cold.

They're calling the colleges to
back up their claim
Grey, grey, grey in Stormhold
To the MONICAN seaside - have
they no shame?
Rain, rain, rainy and cold.

Don't know if we'll fight them, I
don't know if we can
Grey, grey, grey in Stormhold
They've commanded the warfield
ever since they began
Rain, rain, rainy and cold.

But even if they manage to
capture the bay
Grey, grey, grey in Stormhold
Pass'laquans hate our weather,
so we'll get it back one day
Rain, rain, rainy and cold.

Pass'laquans hate our weather,
so we'll get it back one day
Rain, rain, rainy and cold.





Left: Baron Jon and Baroness Margie at High Tide War. Right: Members of the populace enjoying the beach and building sand “fortifications”, also at High Tide War. Photos by Julia of the Ravens.

From the Barony

The latest missive from the Baron and Baroness

Greetings to our populace as we farewell the summer and welcome the milder weather of autumn. With autumn comes April and the annual Rowany Festival, to which we will wayfare in April. We hope to be joined by many members of our Barony for this wondrous event. If you are planning to camp, or eat, with us please contact Baron Jon regarding participating in food fund of communal camp facilities.

This past month has seen the inaugural Fibre Guild meeting at the Dolphin’s Keep which was so well attended we are now negotiating better use of the back room space which will be our meeting room in future. The plan is a removable tabletop for the pool table so we don’t have to bring in any additional tables.

February Crafhall fell on Valentine’s Day so we had a relatively small contingent with whom we shared our evening meal, however, the day was well attended with Baron Jon instructing in basic book binding, inspired by the Nag Hammadi codex.

This month Baroness Margie joined members of Krae Glas and Stormhold at Pride March in St Kilda. The weather was very pleasant compared to the heat we have experienced in previous years. It was an affirming experience for Clan Blue Feather folk and their allies, as well as an appropriate way to display the inclusivity of our SCA. There is no place for hate in our Barony, or in the wider SCA.

Our thanks to Airdin and his stewarding team for a splendid event, Return of the Kraken, at the start of the month. Much fun was had by shipwrights, sailors (pirates) and assailing landlubbers. Water, so much water, and so much fun and laughter. We all needed that and look forward to this event as a regular annual event. The weather was perfect!

Along with a contingent of our populace we also attended High Tide 3. Baroness Margie and Baron Jon both donned armour to aid our neighbours from the south in the Saturday morning war. Baron Jon showed his prowess in the archery roving round in the afternoon, while Margie ventured to the beach and enjoyed rolling in the swell, while others created castles and fortifications on the sand.

We are looking forward to many events in the future, including the annual Chess Challenge with Stormhold in March, a Royal Brunch in May following the Royal event in Stormhold the previous day, and The Hunt event in June.

If you have witnessed deeds which should be brought to our notice, or the notice of The Crown, please let us know. We can only reward what we know about.

In service,
Jon and Margie
Baron and Baroness of Krae Glas

Seeking New Chronicler

Send Applications by 16th March

— JULIA OF THE RAVENS

Greetings! The Barony of Krae Glas is seeking a new chronicler.

The position involves publishing a semi-regular newsletter, preferably monthly, attending monthly Council meetings (or sending an apology) and reporting.

To be eligible, you need to be a current SCA member that is 18 years or older.

Please send your applications by 16 March 2026 to chronicler@lochac.sca.org, with a courtesy copy to chronicler@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org.

Do please include your membership number, mundane and SCA names, and any relevant

experience, along with any important plans or great ideas you would seek to enact if successful in winning the role.

If you would like to know more about the job, or to discuss how you see yourself taking it forward, I would love to hear from you!

Yours in Service,
Julia of the Ravens

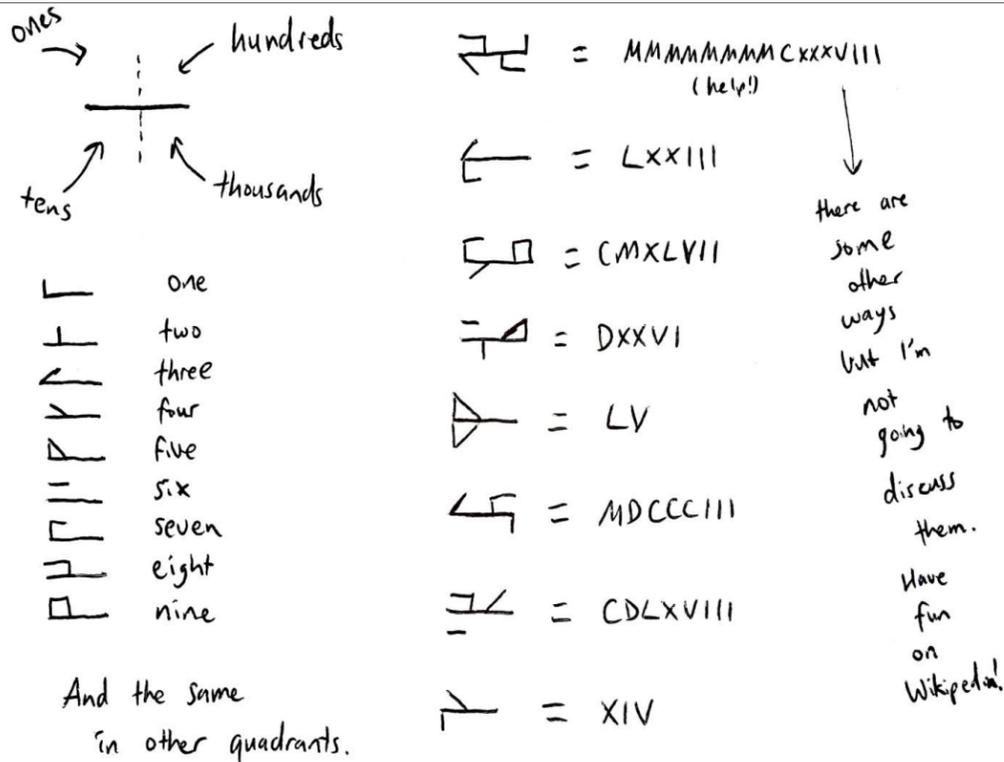


Diagram on Cistercian Numerals, drawn by Joanna of Braidwood.

Cistercian Numerals

Weird nerd inventions from the 13th century

— JOANNA OF BREADWOOD

Your hand is cramping. You just drew like 300 cherubs, all with little wings and harps. The next page has HORSE FROM FRONT!!!! The text block is long, and there's 500 pages to number, not to mention numbering all of the notes and lists! Your hand is in agony just thinking about it. What's a 13th century Cistercian monk to do?

Well, fear ye not! The archdeacon of Leicester, John of Basingstoke, just had a totally rad idea – a number system basing its stokes on the same concepts as prior 12th century shorthand systems (although he's going to say it was from the Greeks, because he's a total simp for their culture, and that will make it sound way cooler). Behold – the Cistercian Numeral System!!!! (above).

You start with a horizontal stave. The stave has four quadrants, and each

sector corresponds to either the ones, tens, hundreds, or thousands. If you leave the stave blank, it is a 0. Using this system, numbers from 0 to 9,999 can be indicated with a single glyph, saving lots of space. That's more than enough for dates, page numbers, and lists. Sure, it's not very good for arithmetic, but that's what an abacus is for, you're here to write page numbers! Now hop to; there's still hours of daylight left and the lay brothers will roast you if you're in here slacking while they are tilling the fields.

I'm sure no one will invent a printing press in 200 years, popularising a completely different and far more robust numeral system some weird Italian guy got from the Arabic world, thus making all your effort to learn to use these Cistercian numerals irrelevant.

Now go forth and wow all your friends with your cool new numeral system!

From the editor

Technically it's all from me, but still

If you want to write it – I want to read it.

And I want to make everyone else read it too :P

You could have an article about whatever niche topic you want added to this very newsletter!

You could be as unhinged as me. It could happen.

Send any write ups (almost any length, I can make it work) completely without context to joannabraidwood@gmail.com. Make it happen.



About the editor

Joanna of Braidwood is probably a little mad.

If you made it this far, thanks for joining us.

That's all folks! Huzzah!



Regnum:

☞ Baron – Baron Jon Dai of the Lane
bandb@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org

☞ Baroness – Baroness Margie of Glen More
bandb@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org

☞ Seneschal – Lady Rúnfríðr Keiliselgr (she/her)
seneschal@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org

☞ Reeve – Tiarna Finn of St Monica
reeve@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org

☞ Chronicler – Lady Julia of the Ravens (any)
chronicler@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org

☞ Arts and Sciences – Lady Emelye Ryder
artsandsciences@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org

☞ Chatelaine – Bermund Wandelber
chatelaine@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org

☞ Captain of Archers – Lady Maude atte Weylete (any)
archers@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org

☞ Armoured Combat Marshal – Master Cormac Lenihan (he/him)
marshal@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org

☞ Fencing Marshal – Elef á Suðrmannalandi (they/she/he)
fencing@kraeglas.lochac.sca.org

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