

The Barge



JANUARY 7, AS XXII (1988)

CALENDAR

Saturday, January 9

Yule Feast, Long Ridge (Sikeston, MO) *
Twelfth Night, Lonely Tower (Omaha, NE) *

Monday, January 11

Archery, 7:00, Arrow Point range. See Idris for details.
Dance, 7:30, Negay's
Canton Riverhold meets. See Zornica for details.

Saturday, January 16

Magna Carta demo, 11 - 4, History Museum *
Twelfth Night, Tre-Girt-Sea (Chicago, IL) *

Monday, January 18

Archery, 7:00, Arrow Point
Officers meeting, 7:30, County Stargaard. Business includes
discussing plans for educational and PR activities during
the next year.
Dance, 7:30, Negay's

Wednesday, January 20

College of Heraldry, 7:30, Janos' house

Thursday, January 21

BARGE deadline

Saturday, January 23

Festival of Maidens, Wurm Wald (Champaign, IL) *

Monday, January 25

Archery, 7:00, Arrow Point
Dance, 7:30, Negay's

Thursday, January 28

BARGE

Monday, February 1

Deadline for March MEWS
Archery, 7:00, Arrow Point
Officers meeting, 7:30, Harald and Aleta's
Dance, 7:30, Negay's
Armored's Guild, 7:30, County Stargaard

Saturday, February 6

Costuming Seminar, Forgotten Sea (Kansas City, MO) *
St. Paul, St. Carol-on-the-Ioor (Charleston, IL) *

Monday, February 8
 Archery, 7:00, Arrow Point
 Dance, 7:30, Negay's
 Canton Riverhold meets

Thursday, February 11
 BARGE deadline

Friday, February 12
 Estrella War IV (runs through Monday) *

Saturday, February 13
 Beggars Feast, Three Rivers *

Sunday, February 14
 Historians Guild, 7:30, Asgeirr's

Monday, February 15
 Officers meeting, 7:30, Elin Redlock's
 Archery, 7:00, Arrow Point
 Dance, 7:30, Negay's

Thursday, February 18
 BARGE

Saturday, February 20
 Calon Con/Midwinter Ball, Standing Stones (Columbia, MO)
 Copernican Follies, Carraig Ban (DeKalb, IL)

INFORMATION ON UPCOMING EVENTS

YULE FEAST Jan. 9 Long Ridge (Sikeston, MO)

A traditional Long Ridge event - site opens at 1:00 pm, feast is at 6:30, other things happen in between. The site is St. Paul's Episcopal Church (directions are in the January MEWS); the feast reservation deadline is past, but all are welcome for the day's activities and any tickets that may be left.

TWELFTH NIGHT Jan. 9 Lonely Tower (Omaha, NE)

This year's event has a Viking theme; the tourney is for Viking round shields, the arts contests are for best complete Viking costume, Viking accessories, original dance, (preferably Norse) bardic poems/songs/stories, and (preferably Norse) embroidery; the sciences contests are for weapons/armor, tools of the Viking era, and jewelry of the Viking era; there is a special contest in meadmaking; and the feast has a Norse/Teutonic flavor. If this sounds appealing, check the January MEWS for more information.

MAGNA CARTA DEMO Jan. 16 History Museum

We will be doing a demo of dancing, and arts and sciences displays in conjunction with the exhibit of the Magna Carta. There will also be a Baronial Championship tourney outside at 12:00

unless the weather is very cold, rainy, or snowy. (In any of those cases, the tourney will be Sunday at 1:00 pm at the indoor fighting site on campus.) The History Museum will provide some drinks for us, but you are also welcome to bring your own. There is a small kitchen we can use, and all food MUST stay in the kitchen. An additional restriction is that there is absolutely no smoking in the building. Tables and chairs will be provided for displays, but Lady Aleta needs to know IN ADVANCE how many are needed. If you have other questions, or wish to volunteer, please see Lady Aleta.

TWELFTH NIGHT Jan. 16 Tre-Girt-Sea (Chicago, IL)

Day time activities at this event are a live chess game, board game tournaments, dance performance workshop, a performance of Amphitryo, a general arts competition, and brewing and vintning contests. The feast will have one remove of Islamic dishes, and one remove of European dishes. More information is in the January PALE.

FESTIVAL OF MAIDENS Jan. 23 WurraWald (Champaign, IL)

This is the fifteenth annual Festival of Maidens, and it will feature a Swiss-style tourney, an armor contest, Slavic dancing, a contest in Slavic and Byzantine embroidery, and the traditional contests: gentleman most persistent and least dangerous to maidens, gentleman least persistent and most dangerous to maidens, risque garb (documentation required), and a slave auction. The feast will consist of twenty-four dishes in five removes: a Zakooski course, a Soup course, a Shashlyk course, a Chicken course, and a Beef course. To find out more about it, read the January PALE.

COSTUMING SEMINAR Feb. 6 Forgotten Sea (KC, MO)

The third annual costuming seminar is being held in cooperation with the Johnson County Community College Community Services. The site is the college; there is free parking available. The January MEWS also lists an address for questions.

ST. PAUL Feb. 6 St. Carol-on-the-Moor (Charleston, IL)

This year's event is the Martyrdom of St. Paul the Simple, rather than just the Feast of St. Paul. There will be a Warlord Tourney, on-site competitions in embroidery, cartography/architectural design, calligraphy, simple metaphysical problems, St. Paul the Simple's martyrology, and some surprises (materials provided, but it will be appreciated if you bring your own pens, hoops, needles, etc); seminars in dancing and arrow making; a musicians conclave; and a feast. More information is in the January PALE.

ESTRELLA WAR IV Feb. 12-15 Phoenix, Arizona

This annual war between Atenveldt and Caid seems to attract lots of Calontir fighters. Besides the fighting, there will be a quest, a stage with performing events, an on-site general store, merchants, dancing, singing, and a rapier tourney. Both the Crown and the Coronet of Calontir are planning on attending this event. NOTE: The autocrats strongly encourage supplying your own drinking water. The water found on site is safe, but not palatable. More info is in the January MEWS.

Although we are hosting this event, there will not be a lot of work involved. It is designed as a fund-raiser for the Kingdom Endowment Fund, so the feast will be catered, mundane food, but in great quantity. Lots of unusual contests are planned, and NEWT WANTS YOU to save your pennies, nickels, dimes, tens, twenties,... Talk to Newt (?) if you want to know more.



From Dover Middle Ages Coloring Book.

PEOPLE OF PERIOD

The Influence of Vasco DaGama

Vasco Da Gama was the Portuguese explorer who discovered the direct sea route from Europe to India by sailing around Africa. The Portuguese had been searching for just such a route since the days of Prince Henry the Navigator (1394 - 1460). In 1488 a Portuguese expedition headed by Bartolomeu Dias had reached and rounded the Cape of Good Hope at the southern tip of Africa and returned to Portugal. With this achievement, the Portuguese king understood that the long quest to find a sea route to the Indies was now near an end. However there were various delays, and it was not until 1497 that the expedition to the Indies actually set forth. To head the fleet the king selected Vasco Da Gama, a minor aristocrat, born in the year 1460 in Sines, Portugal.

Da Gama set forth on July 8, 1497, with four ships under his command and a total crew of 170 men, including interpreters who could speak Arabic. The fleet proceeded to the Cape Verde Islands. Then, rather than following the coastline of Africa as Dias had done, da Gama sailed almost due south, far out into the Atlantic Ocean. He continued south and then turned east to reach the Cape of Good Hope. It was a well chosen route, faster than following the coast, yet requiring much more skill and navigation. Da Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope on November 22, 1497 and then sailed up the east coast of Africa. On the way north, he stopped at a few cities under Moslem control, and in Malindi he picked up an Indian pilot who guided him on a 23 day run across the Arabian Sea to India. On May 20, 1498, ten months after his departure, da Gama arrived at Calicut, the most important trade center of southern India. The Hindu ruler of Calicut, the Zamorin, at first welcomed da Gama. However, the Zamorin was soon disappointed by the cheap goods da Gama offered as gifts. This, combined with the hostility of the Moslem merchants who dominated the trade routes of the Indian Ocean, prevented da Gama from concluding a trade treaty with the Zamorin. Still, when he left Calicut in August, da Gama had a fine cargo of spices on board, as well as a number of Indians.

The trip home was much more difficult; it took three months to cross the Arabian Sea and many of the crew died of scurvy. In the end only two ships reached Portugal, one on July 10, 1499 and the other with da Gama two months later. Only 55 of the original 170 crew made it back to Portugal.

Nevertheless, with his arrival, both da Gama and the king understood that the expedition had been a tremendous success. Six months later the king dispatched Pedro Alvares Cabral to India. He duly reached it, discovering Brazil on the way, and returned to Portugal with a large quantity of spices. But some of Cabral's men had been killed in Calicut, and in 1502 da Gama was sent back there on a punitive mission, heading a fleet of 20 ships. Da Gama's conduct on this expedition was utterly ruthless. Off the Indian coast, he seized a passing Arab ship, and after removing its cargo but not its crew, burnt the ship at sea. The passengers and crew, including several hundred women and children, were killed. When he arrived at Calicut, da Gama demanded that the Zamorin banish all Moslems from the port, and when the Zamorin hesitated, da Gama seized, killed, and dismembered 38 Hindu fishermen and then bombarded the port. Enraged but helpless, the Zamorin granted da Gama's demands. On the way back he stopped and founded the first of many colonies for Portugal along the east African coast. For those deeds he was richly rewarded by the king, who awarded him titles, granted him estates, pensions and other rewards.

Da Gama did not return to India again until 1524, when the new king of Portugal appointed him viceroy. A few months after his arrival he fell ill and died there in December 1524. He was eventually reburied near Lisbon. The basic significance of Vasco da Gama's voyage is that he opened a direct route from Europe to India and the Far East, the impact of which was felt and to be felt on many nations. In the short run, the greatest impact was upon the country of Portugal. Through control of the new trade route to the East this formerly poor country on the outskirts of the civilized world soon became one of the richest countries in Europe. The Portuguese rapidly built up a substantial empire of colonies around the Indian Ocean, with outposts in India, Indonesia, Madagascar, and the east coast of Africa. They succeeded in retaining several of these colonies until well into the last half of the 20th century. Da Gama's opening of new trade routes to India and the Far East dealt a severe setback to the Moslem traders that had formerly controlled the trade routes of the Indian Ocean. These traders were thoroughly defeated and displaced by the Portuguese. Furthermore, the overland trade routes from India into Europe soon fell into disuse because the Portuguese sea route was now faster and cheaper. This was injurious to both the Ottoman Turks and to the Italian trading cities (such as Venice) that had formerly controlled the eastern trade. For the rest of Europe, however, this meant that goods from the Far East were a good deal cheaper than before.

Ultimately, however, the greatest impact was not upon Europe or the Middle East, but upon India and Southeast Asia. Before 1498, India had been isolated from Europe. Indeed, throughout most of history India had been fairly self-contained, with the only important foreign influences coming from the northwest. Da Gama's voyage, however, brought India into direct contact with European civilization via the sea routes. The influence and power of the Europeans continued to grow stronger in India, until by the last half of the 19th century, the entire subcontinent was subject to the British crown (it might well be noted that this was the first time in Indian history that it was united under a single ruler). As for Indonesia, it fell first under European influence and then complete control. Only in the mid-twentieth century did it regain areas of autonomy. Da Gama's influence through his opening of the sea routes was large and lasting. It had a huge impact on Portugal, India, the Middle East, and Africa. It made Portugal a rich and powerful nation which other nations of Europe would have to deal with, and as long as the world revolves around economics, riches are and will be most influential. Hence Vasco da Gama has earned a place as an Influential Person of Period.

Yours in service,

The Lord Philippe du Anolia, CoA

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Any fighter who has not recently (since Dec. 5) done so, please see Sir Cormac and sign a new waiver for your fighter card.

Master Brumbar and Sir Cormac need large sheets (e.g. appliance cartons) of corrugated cardboard to make furniture for the barroom brawl at Beggars Feast.

Philip du Anolia would like to have local people's contributions to the beggars stew brought to meeting Feb. 11 so he can start the stew on Friday.

Lord Kazmirus is working on ideas for a portable surface for indoor fighting. See him if you have any ideas.

Plan to participate in the demo at the History Museum on Jan. 16. It will be mostly dancing and displays, but there will be a baronial championship tourney as well. Anyone in garb that day will receive free admission to the Magna Carta exhibit (but if you're in garb, you'd better also help with the demo . . .)

Because the winner of the Championship Tourney will be representing the Barony at the War of the Lilies, fighters must be authorized to enter the list.

Anyone interested in taking over as chronicler, please talk to Aleta NOW!

I would like to offer my thanks to those who sent holiday cards during the past season. They were much appreciated. I am sorry I was unable to return the thoughts in a more personal way. They were the only Christmas decoration in my apartment this year and were much appreciated.

Thanks.

Lord Gerald

I am continuing the raffle we had last quarter. The way this works is you give me something to report on -- a medieval moment, enter a contest, win a contest, do a project, make something -- anything for an excuse, you get a raffle ticket. They will be drawn for a prize after quarterly reports are written. Also if you wish to donate something for a prize, see me (Lord Gerald).



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