



# The Y E O M A N





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## A Note from Your Chronicler

When the temperature drops it seems that spirits rise, so you can then guess that this season is my favorite. I have dozens of books celebrating all the different holidays that happen during November and December, not to mention having written two books myself and two more in the wings. There is something about a season dedicated to doing for others and sharing the best of ourselves that brings out the best in everyone. This edition of *The Yeoman* will be looking at this celebration of light and warmth as seen during period.

I am wishing all of you a season of warmth and light of family and friends, of good memories and peace. So whether you share from your heart or from your many skills take the time to share your joy with others and I will be back again in January to celebrate the beginning of a new year .

Yours in Story, Song and Service,  
*Lady Scholastica Joycors*  
 Chronicler of Bright Hills

## The Story Behind the Cover Illumination

On 24 December 1430, Anne of Burgundy, duchess of Bedford, presented what is now known as the Bedford Hours (British Library Additional MS 18850) with her husband's consent to her nephew, the 8-year-old Henry VI. The newly-crowned king of England was enjoying his Christmas with the ducal couple in their residence at Rouen, awaiting his French coronation in Paris.

For clarefication, Christmas was not as obvious an occasion for gift-giving as it is now. By far more popular was the Roman-rooted, festive exchange of presents on New Year's Day, known in France as *etrennes* (perhaps from the Roman goddess *Strena*, whose feast was celebrated on 1 January). At the turn of the 15th century large sums of money were spent on the *etrennes*, which became, especially in France and Burgundy, a lavish courtly ritual, with princes like Anne's grandfather, Philip the Bold, duke of Burgundy, spending on average over 6% of his yearly budget on New Year's presents. The duchess's gift may well have emulated this relatively well-established tradition.

The manuscript Anne offered to Henry was a truly royal gift. Its 38 large miniatures and over 1,200 marginal roundels illustrating its prayers were painted by the best Parisian workshops of the time. The prayerbook was not made with Henry in mind, however. Its royal splendour was a recycled one. The work on the manuscript's fabulous decoration may have started as early as the 1410s and another royal prince may have been its intended recipient, perhaps the early-deceased dauphin, Louis, duke of Guyenne.

John, duke of Bedford, acquired the unfinished manuscript sometime after 1422. Following the deaths of his brother Henry V and the English king's adoptive father, Charles VI of France, John became Regent of France on behalf of the baby King Henry VI. Soon after, in 1423, the duke married Anne of Burgundy in a powerful political match designed to ensure the stability of English rule in France.

[blogs.bl.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2012/12/a-royal-gift-for-christmas.html](http://blogs.bl.uk/digitisedmanuscripts/2012/12/a-royal-gift-for-christmas.html)

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# THE BARONRY OF BRIGHT HILLS

To one and all of Bright Hills finest do we, Kollack and Rebecca Baron and Baroness offer our most joyful greetings.



 found myself reading our letter from one year ago and checking out some posts through out the year. Just to see what has transpired in the last year. I have to say we are both so proud to say that we are Bright Hills. There have been trials, there have been tears, there have been triumphs beyond imaginings. Through all this, we have come together. Maybe not as physically as would be nice but most importantly in steadfast support. No questions, no judgements. Just acceptance and love. Let's continue to try to hold these moments close to us for these are what make us the best we can be. We are very thankful for the support and care that you have shown us this last year and we look forward with open eyes and open arms to the coming year and all it's potential adventures. We hope to share them with as many of you as we can as we continue on our journey.

Speaking of journeys, We will be traveling to Unevent but other than that it looks like this December will be pretty quiet... Well maybe not in our house. The traveling may be down a bit, but be prepared....for the coming months will bring with it many opportunities to visit and greet our cousins from around the kingdom. Beginning with Kingdom 12th night at Sacred Stone the weekend of January 13th and continuing with Lochmere's Transiberian Tour the weekend following. What are we doing the first Friday of January you ask? That will be time set aside to fellowship with all of Bright Hills and her friends of course. We so look forward to seeing you there!

Yours in Service and Gratitude,

*Kollack and Rebecca von Zweekle*

Baron and Baroness of Bright Hills







# Minutes of the Bright Hills Board Meeting November 18, 2106 at 7:05 PM

**Attendees:** Kenneth Kepple, Erin Scimeca, Jay & Amy Nardone, Katherine Hawkins, Barb & Robert Kriner, Karen Whitlock, Claudia Bosworth, MyLinda Butterworth, Becky Ritterhouse, Michelle England, Robyn Becker, Heather and Matthew Regan.

## Report from the Baronage

Thank you to the people who helped with crown. Baron and Baroness will be attending unevent and 12th Night.

## Officer Reports:

**Seneschal:**

**Chronicler:** Scholastica Joycors—

**Exchequer:** Lady Clara — We have about \$10,000 in our account.

**Webminister:** Lord Janyyn Fletcher of Lancastreschire— These are the following things I supported for the web site last month:

Posted the new Yeoman to the site. Posted the new OP to the site. Spent 14 hours troubleshooting and correcting the “internal 500 error” we were randomly seeing on the site. Corrected the typo in Baron Heinrich’s email link. Corrected the temporary links for crown tourney. Completed the new pages for the coronet designs. Completed the setup of the coronet polling on Yahoo. Added coronet designs to the site

I just want to also add that if anyone sees something they think is incorrect or needs attention to please simply contact me. There is no need for drama or roundabout means of communications. I take the site and keeping it updated seriously. Also there are sections of the site (heavy, rapier, A&S) that I have no pictures and writeups for. If I am provided information for these areas, I would gladly post that information.

**Heralds Report:** Lord Richard Wyn—

**A&S Report:** MOAS will be stepping down in February. Facebook and email needs to be handed to the webminister to be taken care of. Lady Katarzyna Witkowska has asked if she could have a Page’s class (and adults too) on making herbal gifts for Christmas, to be held the night of the December meeting 12/16/16. I told her it was fine with me!

Maestra Barbara took a class on calligraphy, and card weaving at Black Diamond’s Fall Gathering.

Alexander de Burdegala - Had 4 people for A&S night. We worked on strategy for getting the other guilds better represented in the Barony

**Chatelain Report:** Lady Rebekkah Samuel— Plans to hold newcomers classes are proceeding. We will be putting in some dates in the calendar. The first class will be scheduled for the second Friday in January.

Money has come up short. We can use the list to decide who will teach and when. Baroness Wynne, would you be able to do the Persona and Heraldry class on the second Friday in January?

**Minister of the Lists:** Lord Alexander Fowler— not much to report.

**Knights Marshall:** Lord Randver Askmadr— no report.

**Youth Minister:** Lady Katarzyna Witkowska— I am working on setting up a Pages Track for Winter University. At the December 16th meeting, I would like to have a Page’s class (and



adults too) on making herbal gifts for Christmas. More information will be forthcoming; there will be a small fee for supplies.

### Guild Reports:

**Armors** – Heinrich taught beginning armoring (knees and elbows) at Black Diamond's Fall Gathering. The class ran from 10:30 to 4:30. There were 6 to 8 who took part, one being His Majesty in between teaching the new and young fighters. I am im'ing one of the students now about a planishing ball.

**Brewers** – We have been approached by cooks guild to provide Mead for birthday. Tavern needs the pumps replaced.

**Cheesemongers:** Master Chirhart— no report.

**Clothiers** – no report.

**Cooks Guild:** Baroness Wynne— The Bright Hills Cooks Guild held its November in the home of Lord Alexander on Sunday, 13 Nov. It was a very well-attended meeting, with four new gentles in attendance.

The following items were discussed:

Hearth cooking at the Steppington Farm Museum, Fri and Sat November 25 and 26. Any member if the guild still interested in helping, please contact the guild mistress.

We have been granted permission to hold a bake sale. Please label your items with its ingredients. We will also have cider and hot beverages for sale. Contact Abby at the museum for garb. Try to arrive around 8:00 am, to get things started.

Baronial Birthday has now become a royal progress! The menu will be expanded a bit with the promise of fish in jelly courtesy of Cordelia for head table. We welcome any and all to assist in the making of what will be a fine feast. Pre-cook date and location will be published after the first of the year.

#### MENU:

1st course: Fresh cheese, pickles, bratwurst and homemade mustard.

2nd course: Stuffed chicken, savory toasted cheese over a green vegetable, roasted squash, faro and Dutch carrots.

3rd course: Dessert buffet.

Our head cook, Countess Rowan has put out a request for mead to the brewers of the kingdom. She plans on using this for the formal toasting at feast. It was decided to provide their Majesties with a complimentary room for Birthday from Guild funds.

Deirdre O Bardon has agreed to autocrat Trial by Fire, which will be held at the Baltimore Bowman, September 8-10, 2017.

Our next meeting will be at the home of Cordelia and Barre, Sunday December 11. Directions will be posted later.

A new book, "The Medieval Cook" by Maggie Black was passed around for perusal. It provides some fine recipes and should be checked out. Try the library first.

-----  
It is with much pride and deep humility that I report the doings of your Cooks Guild.

Oh my...what a day! The guild was asked by Angela Yau (Faye) director and Abby Harting, curator to demonstrate period cooking in the farm house on the Victorian stove and hearth. We also brought along the Cooks Guild Bake Sale to provide guests of the museum some of the wonderful treats members of the guild always come up with.





It was a learning experience and a thrill to use the stove, to explain how food was prepared and baked and simply meet with interested people. Kids loved it to as we had many helpers throughout the day. After the event was over, we also fed the participants with stew, biscuits, pumpkin and apples pies, cider, hot chocolate and coffee. No one went away hungry!

I want to thank Faye and Abby for inviting us, and the following members who spent time and effort to make the day a success...

Countess Rowan, who sent along paper goods, neat serving ware and good wishes

Master Chirhart for the great pie...it went to the Ball afterwards...what was left that is...

Mistress Cordelia, who demonstrated bread-making and baking in the outside brick oven

Mistress Jeanne who manned...Ladied...the bake sale and kept everything moving

Erin, a new member who was an all-around kitchen help, fire-minder and bright example of our younger members.

Thank-you one and all. I am so proud to be a member of the cooks guild and the barony of Bright Hills...we always seem to give it our best. Wynne

**Herb Group** – Herb group is inactive, and will probably remain so unless someone revives it.

**PAGE** : Faolin is going to try and start holding open bardic sessions at his home again soon

**St. Matthias** – no report.

**Scriptorium**: Lady Aemilia Rosa— nothing to report.

**Woodworkers** – no report.

### Old Business:

Designs for coronets has been extended to end of the month. Currently shown on the webpage with two new designs.

There were 307 people at Crown Tourney according to Troll, we only needed 260 to break even. Feast was sold out and we were able to donate \$313 to Royal Travel fund from the fundraiser lunch.

### New Business:

Tatiana will to bring a proposal for Harvest Wars to be held a week before Halloween for 2017. Need to spike now.

The Regional Seneschal ran the polling at a cost of \$215 of which \$141 was for postage. It was proposed that we reimburse the cost. The motion passed.

It was proposed that our annual 12th Night be held on January 6, 2107 and that we combine with our cousins from Lochmere. Motion made and passed.

Henrich would like to set up newcomers classes like they do in Black Diamond with a one day event.

No meeting in December all reports should be posted on the BH officers yahoo page by December 22, 2016.

Next meeting will be January 20, 2017. Meeting adjourned at 7:23.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### **Yule!**

December 11, 2016, Barony of Caer Mear

The Baron and Baroness of Caer Mear have traveled to Milan to open winter trade routes and to celebrate Yule. Courtly life in Milan is much different than back home in Germany; more dancing, more games, family rivalries....

Join the Baron and Baroness of Caer Mear in a day of dance, games, and family competitions as three Italian Households vie for Caer Mear's winter trade contract. Clever wits, gold coin, and quick feet will determine with winning Household for the day!

Cost Notes: This event is being offered for FREE. !

<http://caermear.atlantia.sca.org/yule.activities.html>

### **Yule Toy Tourney**

December 09- 11, 2016, Barony of Nottingham Coill

The Barony of Nottingham Coill invites you to join us in celebrating Yule Toy Tourney 2016 in the fashion of the Ancient Romans. Saturnalia was the winter celebration of Saturn, the god of the sun and harvest season and a time of peace. In the spirit of the Season, we are proud to be sponsoring Country Santa again this year by gathering toys for the children and families of our Barony. The toys will be given out to children by the Country Santa organization to help make the Yule season joyous for everyone! Check out [countrysanta.org](http://countrysanta.org) for more information about this worthy cause! The cabins are 6 person cabins, with individual bunks and 2 inch thick mattresses. Electricity is available in each cabin, and the heaters work VERY well. Cabins are 6 person cabins, with beds and with very efficient heaters. Windows all have blinds on them. The event cost is one new, unwrapped toy per person!

### **Bright Hills 12th Night**

January 6, 2017 at 7 PM

Bring a potluck dish and if you wish 12th night gifts to share. Our cousins from Lochmere will be joining us.

### **Kingdom of Atlantia 12th Night**

January 13- 15, 2017, Barony of Sacred Stone

The Spanish court of Isabelle and Ferdinand is one of the richest in the world. Columbus has returned from his voyages and has brought treasures from new lands. Their most gracious Majesties of Spain have invited their friends from near and far to celebrate their good fortune and to join them for 12th Night festivities and the la Danza de Oro (the Dance of Gold) ball.

Beautiful art adorning the walls, fatal intrigue in the courts, ladies and lords alike in rich velvets and silks, a rowdy tavern filled with songs and games of chance, a grand feast filled with delicious and exotic dishes, and dancing into the night.... all this and more awaits you at 12th Night.

<http://www.twelfthnight.atlantia.sca.org/>

### **Spanish Inquisition 2017**

21 January 2017 @ 9:00 am - 9:00 pm

Nobody expects the Spanish Inquisition ... again!

Enjoy mayhem, merriment, and fun as Lochmere will be surprised by the Spanish Inquisition arriving in January 2016! There will be performances, arts, fun, frivolity, and feasting. Come and enjoy!

<http://lochmere.atlantia.sca.org/calendarevent/spanishinquisition2017/>



**DEMO:** The Barony of Bright Hills has agreed to do a demo for The Margaret Brent Regional Center in New Carrollton, MD. This is a school within the Prince George's County Public Schools that serves children ages 5-21 with severe and profound disabilities. There are 2 programs. One is for students with multiple disabilities (generally a combination of intellectual plus orthopedic, visual, and/or muscular). The other is for students with autism.

The date is Thursday, March 9, 2017. We will help give the students a day full of sensory input and activities.

The demonstration will occur 10:30-12 and 1-2:30 to allow for dismissal prep. If you can help or have any suggestions and questions, please contact Lady Rebekkah Samuel (mka Victoria Wank) at [vwank35@comcast.net](mailto:vwank35@comcast.net).

# Atlantian Calendar of Events

December 2016			
3	Unevent	Raven's Cove	Kenansville, NC
9-11	Yule Toy Tourney	Nottingham Coill	Pickens, SC
January 2017			
7	Inter-Baronial 12th Night	Marinus	
13-15	Kingdom of Atlantia 12th Night	Sacred Stone	Greensboro, NC
21	Spanish Inquisition - Torquemada's Trans-iberian Tour	Lochmere	Severna Park, MD
27-29	Tourney of Mannanan Mac Lir XXVI	Tear-Seas Shore	Ridgeville, SC
28	Ice Castles	Black Diamond	Blacksburg, VA
February 2017			
4	Feast of Fools	Roxbury Mill	Rockville, MD
4	Winter University 2017	Raven's Cove	Kenansville, NC
11	Tournament of Love & Beauty-Ponte Alto Baronial Birthday	Ponte Alto	Leesburg, VA
11	Giita of the Stone	Middlegate	Winston Salem, NC
17-19	Nottingham Coill Baronial Birthday	Nottingham Coill	Bennettsville, SC
18	Bright Hills Baronial Birthday	Bright Hills	Manchester, MD
24-26	Tournament of Ymir and Baronial Investiture	Windmasters Hill	Reidsville, NC

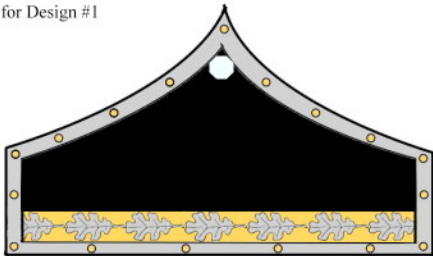
## Coronet Designs - [http://brighthills.atlantia.sca.org/?page\\_id=1147](http://brighthills.atlantia.sca.org/?page_id=1147)

### Design 1

Front and back of Design #1



Side Pieces - 4  
for Design #1



### Design 2

Front & Back  
Design #2  
Note: The Gold in the coronet represents  
scalloped work, the real scalloped work would have to  
be designed by the artist.  
Sides would be the same design, extenders  
would not have the mountains

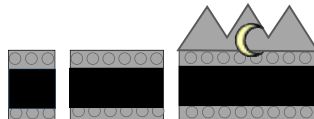


### Design 3

Design #3 Front  
Black White Background  
Sides have same design with  
mountain peaks



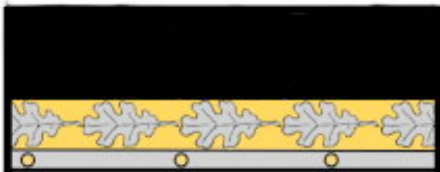
### Design 4



#### Notes:

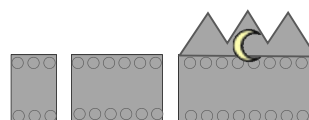
- Main Band is 20" x 1.5" silver with beading along top and bottom and lettering is silver with a black enameled background
- Mountains are 3" x 1" high set with moonstone crescent moons
- Lettering is Always the Best From Bright Hills in latin.
- Based on 14<sup>th</sup> Century German crown. Image included.
- For sizing purposes, hinged plates are included in 1", 2" and 3" with the 3" having a set of mountain peaks.

### Extenders



Voting for a design will happen in January on the website. You have till the end of December to turn in your design.

### Design 5





# On Christmas in the Middle Ages

Nicola de Bracton of Leicester



Christmas as we know it is largely a Victorian development. Such traditions as the Christmas tree and Santa Claus or Father Christmas are relatively recent in the grand scheme of things. Yet we can recognize in the Christmas of the late medieval period the ancestor of our own celebration. Most of the customs I will discuss are from England, but some were common throughout Europe.

Until the late Middle Ages, the celebration of Christmas Day ranked fairly low among the major festivals of the Christian world. Twelfth Night celebrations far surpassed the rather solemn, low key observance of the birth of Christ, while more festive Yule celebrations (originally a pagan observance) persisted into the Christian era.

However, beginning with the rise of the cult of the Virgin Mary in the twelfth century, a trend can be discerned away from the importance of local saints and towards emphasis on the major figures of the Church, especially on the Holy Family. The fourteenth and fifteenth century cycle plays, presented in English towns by local guilds on or about Corpus Christi day (a movable feast sometime between May 21 and June 24) were one result of this trend. These plays focusing on the life of Christ sometimes included elaborate stagings of the nativity. Thus began the first widespread popularization of the Christmas story in England. The first Christmas carols were also connected to the performance of these plays. We don't normally think of Christmas as a midsummer tradition, but this, indeed, was its roots.

Slowly, the emphasis on the nativity in the cycle plays lead to a rise in interest in Christmas itself. Yule became synonymous with Christmas, and customs such the Yule log and decorating with evergreens, despite their non-Christian origins, became associated with this holiday as well. Holly, ivy, laurel, and other evergreens were often used thenceforth as metaphors for the infant Christ; even the mistletoe, whose pagan associations are the clearest, continued to be incorporated into the celebrations. In the 16th century, garlands of evergreens were sometimes placed around wire hoops; three of these would then be placed together to form a sort of ball, which was then hung. Alas, despite the scene in *The Lion in Winter* featuring a huge decorated evergreen, Christmas trees were a much-later addition. Christmas gifts, however, were common well before the 15th century, when in England legislation had to be passed limiting them. However, gift-giving did not as yet concentrate on Christmas Day, but occurred throughout the holiday season.

The Christmas season was particularly marked by good cheer. Households stood open and ready to welcome neighbors and visitors. A popular custom was mumming, in which revelers put on masks or the clothes of the opposite sex and, accompanied by minstrels and musicians, traveled from house to house. Another custom (practiced particularly in the universities) was the appointment of a Lord of Misrule, who, dressed in gaudy or outrageous clothing, presided over the holiday merriment with the pomp due an actual monarch. The Lord of Misrule sometimes led revelers on wild nighttime processions through town, which of course angered the resident church leaders. However, churchmen had their own form of this custom--the appointment as a young boy as bishop for the holiday season. As you may have noticed, the holiday season was well-known for role reversal; in fact, the custom of lords serving their servants for a day was quite common. Lords usually chose this time to bestow gifts upon their servants; a common present was a new suit of clothes. The Christmas season in the Middle Ages and Renaissance was, as it is today, a welcome escape from everyday cares.

## Sources:

Ashton, John. *A Righte Merrie Christmasse* . (New York, 1968)  
Brand, John. *Popular Antiquities of Great Britain*. (London, 1853.)  
The author also thanks Prof. E.R. Rose for his enlightening information.

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A Medieval Christmas - Dr. Amanda Hopkins • <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yDPWljXe-Eg>

# Hanukkah in the Middle Ages

Hanukkah, also known as the Festival of Lights, commemorates the rededication of the Temple of Jerusalem by Judah Maccabee and his followers after the Maccabean Revolt against Greek rule around 160 BC where very little oil was left that had not been defiled by the Greeks. Oil was needed for the Temple's eternal light. There was only enough oil to burn for one day, yet miraculously, it burned for eight days, the time needed to prepare a fresh supply of oil. An eight day festival was declared to commemorate this miracle. The festival, which is celebrated between late November and later December, gained more prominence in the Middle Ages.

While early texts reveal little information about this festival, by the medieval period more literature emerged, such as the Scroll of Antiochus, which provided new legends and details about the event. This includes the tradition of the Hanukkah menorah, which involves lighting eight lights, one for each night. Many medieval examples of the menorah have been preserved such as the illumination to the left.

In medieval times, Hanukkah became a popular festival. It was said that "Even he who draws his sustenance from charity, should borrow, or sell his cloak to purchase oil and lamps, and kindle" the Hanukkah light. Special foods, like cheese and pancakes, were eaten during feasts, gifts of money were exchanged, children would play with dreidels, and adult men would play with cards.

The five most eaten food of Hanukkah were:

**CHEESE:** It is customary to serve food that is fried in oil or made with cheese. This tradition was said to stem from the Book of Judith. Judith served the Assyrian general, Holofernes salty cheese to make him thirsty and then gave him wine to quench his thirst and get him drunk. When he fell asleep, Judith cut off his head and brought it back in a basket, saving her city, Bethulia, from being ravaged by Holofernes' troops. Judith's heroism is celebrated by symbolically serving cheese and other dairy foods at Hanukkah.

**SUGANYIOT/BIMUELOS/BIRMUELOS/BUÑUELOS:** Nothing commemorates this better than these delicious donuts, which are popular the world over but began as a Sephardic tradition. A delicious, soft donut, sprinkled on top with icing sugar and filled with jam. They are also known as Bimuelos/Birmuelos/Buñuelos in Spanish speaking countries. In the Middle Ages, they were recorded in a fifteenth century recipe from Turkey that was discovered after the Sephardic Jews were forced to flee Spain and Portugal.

**HONEY:** Why is honey such a staple during Hanukkah? Many Hanukkah foods can be found in the Even Bohan, a Rabbinical translation of Matthew, by the fourteenth century Jewish physician from Spain, Shem-Tob ben Isaac Shaprut. In it, honey is metaphorical for the sweetness of the Torah (God's Law). Another important Jewish text, the Megillah Yehudit (The Scroll of Judith), begins with a quote from Ezekiel about the eating of a scroll which contains the words of God, which will taste "as sweet as honey in the mouth".

**ITRI/ITRIYYA (PASTA):** Itri was made of the same dough as bread but was boiled instead of baked. It roughly translates to "vermicelli". During the Middle Ages, it was eaten with with honey and became popular among Ashkenazi Jews. It was found in several texts that circulated in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

**LEVIVOT (PANCAKES):** Unfortunately, these are not the latkes that are currently found in many homes during Hanukkah. The much beloved potato pancakes are a staple for North American Jews but were a more recent addition to the Hanukkah table. Levivot, the medieval predecessors, were made of flour, mixed with boiling oil and fried in oil. Prior to the use of potato, levivot could also be made from various vegetables with flour, such as parsnips, carrots or onions.



Menorah medieval – Hebrew Bible, illuminated by Joseph the Frenchman, Spain, 1299-1300

<https://www.jfedgmw.org/hanukkah>  
<http://www.medievalists.net/2011/12/hanukkah-in-the-middle-ages/>  
<http://www.medievalists.net/2015/12/5-medieval-hanukkah-foods/>



# Make We Myrth – A Brief History of Christmas Music

by Scholastica Joycors

The sound of carolers on the street, music in homes or in our churches this time of year stirs and gladdens the heart, but isn't that what Christmas music is supposed to do? Our English word carol, so say the scholars, comes from the *ancient Greek dramas the choros* or chorous which appear from time to time during the play as a singing commentary on the plot and often dancing in a circle. By the Middle Ages the word carol had come to mean singing and dancing in a circle just as you did when you as a child sang, "Ring Around the Rosy". In the Middle Ages people caroled on many occasions, but by the end the sixteenth century the dancing part of caroling would fade away, leaving the singing to take on a life all it's own.

## Earliest Christmas Songs

Latin hymns about Christmas began to surface around the fourth century with St. Ambrose of Milan (339-397), *Veni redemptor gentium* meaning "Come, Redeemer of the Nations" (<https://youtu.be/1yZr3w7YHuQ?list=RD1yZr3w7YHuQ>), which was actually written as an anti-Arianist statement. (Arianism being the early Christian theory of inequality in the Trinity, as opposed to mainstream churches). Other surviving hymns include *A Solius Ortus Cardine* or "From East to West, From Shore to Shore" (<https://youtu.be/F8vY8a2ZK-8>) by Sedulious (fifth century) and works by the Spanish poet Prudentius (348 or after 405). These early pieces were written by monks or other religious scholars for use in worship and were always in Latin so the people did not truly relate to them. These hymns most often approach Christmas from a theological perspective and emphasize the role of the Nativity on man's salvation.



## Medieval Christmas Carols

It wasn't until the late Middle Ages before music began to describe the people and events of the Nativity. St. Francis of Assisi is sometimes called the parent of the carol for it was he who helped shape his parishioners understanding and appreciation of the Bible, especially those passages that deal with the Nativity and the Crucifixion. The story goes that on Christmas Eve 1223, he presented the first live Nativity in a cave just outside the village of Greccio, Italy. It was complete with a reconstructed stable, oxen, sheep, ass, shepherds, Wise Men and the first crèche. With joviality of spirit St. Francis sang the Christmas Mass to a spellbound audience who experienced the Nativity in such a way that it affected them emotionally allowing them to see this event as real. The idea of bringing 'a joyful noise' into religious song revolutionized hymns, as they knew it and laid the groundwork for the miracle plays and mystery plays that would follow.

Other medieval clerics following in St. Francis include the Italian Jacopone da Todi (1228-1306), a Franciscan

mystic whose lyrical Christmas songs began to permeate the thirteenth century ([https://youtu.be/R\\_jekKqdpD0](https://youtu.be/R_jekKqdpD0)) and John Audelay (1430), a blind English priest of Haughmond Abbey in Shropshire, who composed a collection of twenty-five carols which bore the following inscription in red: "I pray yow syrus boothe moore and las/ sing these caroles in cristemas." (I pray you sirs and both more and less/ sing these carols in Christmas").

## The Golden Age

The creativity, which was unleashed in the late Middle Ages, emerged in an outpouring of Christmas songs over the next several centuries. In the thirteenth century we find songs that cross between hymns which included instrumentation and lyrics such as "Alle Psallite Cum Luya" (<https://youtu.be/k5nWAdQ0T9E>), and the French carol "Christmas Eve is here" (<https://youtu.be/21R4X-GwXR4>) or simple carols like "King Herod and the Cock" (<https://youtu.be/ReIBpsfaqNI>). With the coming of the Renaissance, we see an upswing of patronage for the arts in the fourteenth and fifteenth century. Thanks to the creation of the printing press carols in tongue of the common man were spreading all over Europe. In Germany during the fourteenth and fifteenth century treasured songs like "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming" (<https://youtu.be/YecrfQjEJU>); "In Dulci Jubilo" or Good Christian Men Rejoice, (<https://youtu.be/bN4xsXbO-OE>); Noel Nouvelet (<https://youtu.be/ojjMCpXBmEU>); and Joseph, Lieber Joseph Mein" or Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine (<https://youtu.be/JM7mbEbLJ3U>). In England we find songs patterned after ballads and peppered with Latin liturgy. Perhaps the best known example found in a printed collection in 1521 by Jan van Wynkyn de Woods is the "Boar's Head Carol" (<https://youtu.be/jVwr5B6VQZk>) or "I Saw Three Ships" (<https://youtu.be/C5LROczmJHg>).

In late medieval England the mystery or miracle plays performed around Christmas time inspired such compositions as "The Coventry Carol" (<https://youtu.be/UFnM8pSsyUU>) which accompanied the Pageant of the Shearmen and Tailors, a Christmas play produced annually by that guild.

Of course, when it comes to songs of Christmas, we cannot forget Wassailing. The history of the English Wassail actually dates back much farther than most written English carols, and can be traced to the time of the Norman conquests of 1066 A.D. In the Middle Ages, wassailing was a means for the feudal peasants who lived on the land of their lord to be invited to the lord's manner and to dine and drink together and enjoy the bounty of his table. The drink itself comes in a lovely variety of spiked punches and hot, mulled ciders. The "Gloucester Wassail" is a season favorite <https://youtu.be/oO1qGUdnOvQ>.

At the beginning of the sixteenth century we were still enjoying singing carols even King Henry VIII wrote a piece or two like "Green Grows the Holly" (<https://youtu.be/nDYkg5uj2Ao>) but the advent of the Protestant Reformation there was a rapid decline in new works being produced. No country saw a greater suppression of carols than did Great Britain with the rise of the Puritans where for a time many Christmas traditions were forbidden including the singing of Christmas carols. Gratefully the spirit of the Reformation infused many of the Christmas songs written in the centuries to follow and it gave rise to memorable compositions like "O Come All Ye Faithful", "Angels We Have Heard on High" and "O Holy Night".

Looking back over the centuries of music inspired by a simple event we have to say that both old and new Christmas music makes us smile, warms our hearts, and we continue to want to sing them in celebration the season we know as Christmas.

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- <http://radio.wosu.org/post/history-christmas-music-middle-ages-and-renaissance>





# SERVE IT FORTH

## Visions of Sugarplums

*Detailed instructions for preparing sugarplums, the quintessential Christmas sweet, by  
Sharon Cohen*

The dictionary defines a sugarplum as a small round or oval piece of sugary candy. English being the flexible language it is, the name could have come from the resemblance to a small plum. Or it could have come from actual plums preserved in sugar, a relatively new idea in 16th Century England. Prior to this time sugar was so expensive that it was used very sparingly, much as we would use a spice today. In the 1540's, however, sugar started being refined in London which lowered the price considerably, although only well-off families were able to use it lavishly. Preserving with sugar allowed the sweet fruits of summer to be enjoyed all year round, especially during the holiday season.

16th Century cooks did not record their reasons for using one ingredient over another, although they seem to enjoy very much trading recipes and most of those who wrote down their recipes were scrupulous about attributing them to their original creators. Some recipes have delightful names such as "The Lord of Devonshire, His Pudding."

Herbalists of the day, however, had a great deal to say about the produce and seasonings used. John Gerard, whose Complete Herbal was first published in 1597, says of fresh plums that they provide very little nourishment and moreover have a tendency to spoil quickly and taint any dish they are served in. Dried plums, or prunes, he says, are much more wholesome and he recommends them for problem in the digestive system. Thomas Culpepper, writing somewhat later, finds virtue in both the fresh and dried fruit.

Gerard also has a bit to say about sugar cane and the product of its juice, sugar. In addition to listing the benefits of sugar to the respiratory and digestive systems, he starts to list the culinary goodies which can be made with it. He then points out "it is not my purpose to make my book a Confectionairie, a Sugar Bakers furnace, a Gentlewoman's preserving pan..." He also offers a thumbnail sketch of sugar refining.

Whether 16th Century cooks worried about the nutritional value -- or lack thereof -- of their holiday treats is, of course, open to conjecture. I invite anyone who has lived through a massive holiday baking session to ponder this question.

I first tried some 16th Century preserving techniques to make 12th Night gifts, and now understand why sugared fruit was a treat to be saved for special occasions. For one thing, sugared fruit is intensely fruit-flavored and unbelievably sweet, for another it is extremely time-consuming (but not difficult) to make. Fortunately for 12th Night gift-giving, the time to make sugarplums is during the summer, when plums are ripe.

### TO DRIE APRICOCKS, PEACHES, PIPPINS OR PEARPLUMS

Take your apricocks or pearplums, & let them boile one walme in as much clarified sugar as will cover them, so let them lie infused in an earthen pan three days, then take out your fruits, & boile your syrupe againe, when you have thus used them three times then put half a pound of drie sugar into your syrupe, & so let it boile till it comes to a very thick syrup, wherein let your fruits boile leysurelie 3 or 4 walmes, then take them foorth of the syrup, then plant them on a lettice of rods or wyer, & so put them into yor stewe, & every second day turne them & when they be through dry you may box them & keep them all the year; before you set them to drying you must wash them in a litle warme water, when they are half drie you must dust a little sugar upon them throw a fine Lawne.

-- Elinor Fettiplace's Receipt Book, 1604



Sir Hugh Plat, in his *Delights for Ladies* (published 1609), seems to have more faith in his readers' culinary skills, as his recipe is much simpler:

### **THE MOST KINDLY WAY TO PRESERVE PLUMS, CHERRIES, GOOSEBERIES, &c.**

You must first purchase some reasonable quantity of their owne juyce, with a gentle heat upon embers, in pewter dishes. dividing the juice still as it commeth in the strewing: then boile each fruit in his own juyce, with a convenient proportion of the best refined sugar.

You will need:

1-2 pounds of plums (any variety) fully ripe but not too soft  
lots of white granulated sugar (unfortunately I cannot be more exact)  
a large, heavy saucepan, preferably enamel  
a wire rack -- a cookie cooling rack works very well -- set up over a cookie sheet covered with wax paper.

Wash the plums, cut them in half and remove the pits (this is a lot easier if you're using a freestone variety). Lady Fettiplace, you may have noticed, does not mention this step, and may have indeed preserved her plums whole. Since the resulting candy is incredibly sweet, I found that preserving the plums cut in half makes a more reasonable serving of the final product.

Do not peel the plums -- the peel helps them keep their shape while cooking and colors the sugarplums, and most of the peel will come off during processing. The idea is to preserve each half as complete as possible, so you want to avoid breaking down the cellulose structure of the plums. Since the act of cooking, adding heat and moisture, is exactly what breaks down the cellulose structure of food, you will see the words "gently" and "carefully" often in the following instructions.

Put a thin layer of sugar in the bottom of the saucepan. Lady Fettiplace's recipe calls for clarified sugar, because she was working with a less refined sugar than we have today. She would have done the last boiling of the sugar (the last step in modern sugar refining) herself.

Lay the plums halves, cut side down, on the sugar in a single layer. Add enough sugar to completely cover the layer of plums, then lay another layer of plums on top. Continue layering until all the plums have been used and are covered.

Put the pan on the stove over the lowest heat possible. The sugar needs to dissolve in the plum juices without burning. While this is happening, stir very gently and scrape the sugar away from the sides of the pan. Try to disturb the fruit as little as possible.

When all the sugar is dissolved, increase the heat until the syrup comes to a gentle boil. (If it boils too hard, it will break up the plums.) A "walme" is 16th Century culinary for a "warm" or a boiling up, i.e., bringing liquid to a boil. Let the fruit boil for one minute, then remove the pan from the stove. If you are NOT using an enamel pan, gently remove the fruit from the syrup with a slotted spoon and put it in a large shallow glass or ceramic bowl and carefully pour the syrup over it. If you are using an enamel pan, the fruit can stay in it. Carefully place a plate over the fruit to keep it submerged in the syrup. Cover with the pan lid or a clean dish towel and let soak for three days.

A note about sugar: Boiling sugar can cause severe burns. It is very, very hot and tends to stick to the skin like boiling oil. As if that wasn't bad enough, it will also stick to your stovetop and counters with incredible tenacity. Be careful not to splash the hot syrup when transferring the fruit.

Another note: The soaking process should be at room temperature, which means that you can leave it out on the kitchen counter or on an unused stove burner. But beware of ants! If your kitchen is ant-prone, place the pan or bowl in a larger container that has a few inches of water in the bottom.

After three days, carefully remove the fruit and bring the syrup to a boil. Gently return the fruit to the syrup, bring to a gentle boil again and let boil for one minute. Remove from heat and repeat the soaking process. Repeat



the boiling and soaking process one more time, for a total of nine days soaking and approximately 3 minutes boiling.

After the last soaking, remove the fruit from the syrup. Heat the syrup again and dissolve one additional cup of sugar in it. Let the syrup boil until it thickens somewhat (it may darken as well, depending on what variety of plums you've use), add the fruit again and allow it to boil gently for four minutes.

Remove the pan from the heat. With a slotted spoon, carefully remove the plums one at a time from the syrup and rinse the excess syrup away under cool, gently running water. Since no two plums are ever at exactly the same degree of ripeness, some of your plums will have broken up during processing. Never fear, they'll taste just as good as those that kept their shape. If you wish, you may remove any peel that remains on the plums. (Ladies in the 16th Century would have removed the peel -- I like the texture with the peel in place.) Spread the plums on a wire rack and put in a warm dry place. "Yor stewe" was a special drying stove in the 16th Century stillroom. In the 20th century kitchen, a gas oven with just the pilot light burning in it is perfect, but make sure you remove the plums before preheating the oven for dinner. I've lost more plums that way, and burned sugarplums are the stickiest mess you can imagine.

Turn the plums every other day. When the plums are almost dry (they should still feel a bit sticky) sprinkle each side with granulated sugar. Throw a fine Lawne, as Lady Fettiplace says, is to sift the sugar through a piece of fine linen, which is not necessary with modern sugar. The drying time may be anywhere from a few days up to about two weeks, depending on local weather. When the plums are completely dry, store in an air-tight container. Plums processed in July are still soft at 12th Night and are chewier, but still delicious, more than a year later.

I have tried this recipe with several varieties of plum. I find that the Italian plums (prunes) work well because they are free-stone. As they have a higher sugar content and less acid than other varieties, the final sugarplums are much sweeter than those made from other varieties. In addition, they tend to be smaller than other plums, which result in bite-sized sugarplums. Lady Fettiplace probably used the Damson variety, which is a tart plum with purple- black skin and green flesh, and is used today for jam and jelly. Unfortunately, I've never yet been able to find Damsons, but I've used home- grown Santa Rosa plums (which were a bit on the tart side and ended up being totally wonderful) and the ones sold in the market as Black plums and Red plums. All turned out equally well.

I've also processed peaches, apricots and figs this way, with good results, and I've seen similar recipes for candied citrus peel. Figs are not as juicy as the other fruits, so add one-half cup of water to the sugar at the beginning to allow the sugar to dissolve before it burns. Otherwise you'll end up with caramelized figs, which are very tasty but probably were not served on 16th Century tables.

This article first appeared in the July 1997 issue of *Ars Caidis*, the Arts & Sciences quarterly of the Kingdom of Caid (the Society for Creative Anachronism in Southern California, the greater Las Vegas area, Hawaii, and New Zealand).

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# Past Knowledge

*Tips from books of yore*

## How to Serve a Flaming Bird, 1465



Musée du Petit-Palais L.Dut.456, f. 86v (15th c.)

How to Dress a Peacock With All Its Feathers, So That When Cooked, It Appears To Be Alive and Spews Fire From Its Beak

**H**ow to dress a peacock so that it appears to be alive: first, the peacock should be killed by stabbing it in the head with a sharp knife or by slitting its throat, as you would with a baby goat. Then slice the body from the neck all the way to the tail, cutting only the skin and delicately skinning it so that you do not ruin the feathers or the skin. When you have finished skinning the body, turn the skin inside out, from the neck down. Make sure not to detach the head from the skin of the neck; and similarly, make sure that the legs remain attached to the skin of the thighs. Then dress it well for roasting, and stuff it with good things and good spices, and take some whole cloves and use them to stud the breast, and cook the bird slowly on a spit; and place a wet cloth around the neck so that the heat does not overly dry it; and wet the cloth repeatedly. When it is done cooking, remove from the spit and dress it up in its skin.

Prepare an iron device attached to a cutting board that passes through the feet and legs of the peacock so that the iron cannot be seen and so that the peacock stands up on its feet with its head erect and seems to be alive; and arrange the tail nicely so that it forms its wheel.

If you want it to spew fire from its beak, take a quarter ounce of camphor with a little cotton wool around it, and put it in the beak of the peacock, and also put a little aqua vitae or good, strong wine.

When you serve it, light the cotton wool and it will spew fire for a good bit. And to make it even more magnificent, when the peacock is done, you can decorate it with leaves of hammered gold and place the peacock's skin over the gold after you have smeared the inside of the skin with good spices.

The same can be done with pheasants, cranes, geese, and other birds, as well as capons and pullets.

Martino da Como, *Liber de arte coquinaria*

from the collections of <http://askthepast.blogspot.com> by Elizabeth Archibald



# Barony of the Bright Hills

## Practices and Meetings Site Directions

**Heavy & Light Weapons Fighter Practices and A&S classes** are held most Friday nights from

7:30 PM-10 PM

**Business Meetings** are held from 7 PM-8 PM the last Friday of the month (Please See Calendar)

**Location:** Christ the King Episcopal Church, 1930 Brookdale Rd., Baltimore, MD 21244

*Although we use these facilities, the SCA is not endorsed by the Church.*

**Directions:** Exit the Baltimore Beltway (I-695) at Exit 17 (Security Blvd Exit). Take the exit west toward Rolling Road, not the exit east toward Woodlawn. Travel west along Security Boulevard about one-half mile, through traffic-lights at Belmont Avenue, Lord Baltimore Drive, and Rolling Road. Continue west for another block, until you reach Brookdale Road. The Episcopal Church of Christ the King is on your left. Make a left turn onto Brookdale, and then turn right into the Church parking lot.

### INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

If Baltimore County Schools announce they are closed or closing early, there will be no practice that night. You can usually hear the school closing lists on virtually any local radio station broadcast throughout the morning.

### Sunday Afternoon Archery Practice

Lady Dagfinnr Jarnauga, 443-857-5178

Every Sunday 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm (See Calendar)

Location: Baltimore Bowmen Site

Go to [www.baltimorebowmen.com](http://www.baltimorebowmen.com) for directions. If the gate is closed, check to make sure it is not locked. If it is not locked, open it and drive down the hill to the butts. If the gate is locked, park your car and walk down the hill to the butts. NOTE: PRACTICE WILL NOT BE HELD WHEN THERE ARE WEEKEND-LONG EVENTS AND WHEN THERE ARE EVENTS AT THE BOWMEN SITE.

## Guild Gatherings

### Bardic Circle/PAGE

(Sundays 4-8pm; Contact Lady Nina for exact dates or check calendar)

6414 Loch Raven Blvd. Baltimore MD 21239

[ninadances@gmail.com](mailto:ninadances@gmail.com)

### Woodworkers' Guild (Check Calendar)

Lord Luke of Bright Hills' house. 1020 Register Avenue, Towson, MD 21239, (410) 377-6828.

Directions: Take Baltimore Beltway 695 toward Towson. We live near the northern apex of the beltway. Take exit 29 from 695. Take Lock Raven Blvd. south, past Taylor Ave. intersection, go through two lights after Taylor, look for quick right onto Register Avenue just over peak of a hill. (If you miss Register Ave. don't despair: at next light make a right onto Loch Hill Rd., then left at stop sign onto Register Ave. If you've gone too far on Loch Raven, you will reach Northern Parkway – a huge intersection.) Our house is at 1020 Register – white house with porch on right with SCA-type banner hanging from a signpost on front lawn - large driveway. Park on the south side of Register Avenue if there is no room in driveway.

### Brewer's Guild

Lady Livia di Samuele, 7927 Mandan Road Apt 104 Greenbelt, MD 20770; 301-807-5476

[Abramsonsm@yahoo.com](mailto:Abramsonsm@yahoo.com)

Contact with questions or to request special brewing days.

### Clothier's Guild

Lady Faye de Trees, 1402 Hillside Dr., Bel Air, MD 21015; 352-281-8216, [feataure@gmail.com](mailto:feataure@gmail.com).

The clothiers currently do one class per month on a specific project at Friday night fighter practice followed by a sewing session on Sunday afternoon to finish the projects. The location of the Sunday sessions varies. (Check calendar)

### Textile Arts Guild

Mistress Brienna Llewellyn Lindsey, 3009 Ebbtide Dr., Edgewood, MD 21040, [410.598.3422](tel:410.598.3422), [ladybrienna@gmail.com](mailto:ladybrienna@gmail.com).

TAG meets the first Sunday of every month. Check calendar for location and times

### Armors' Guild

Baron Heinrich, 3114 Littlestown Pike, Westminster, MD 21158; 443-789-8109, [lands\\_heinie@yahoo.com](mailto:lands_heinie@yahoo.com)  
Weekends by appointment.

### Cook's Guild

Baroness Wynne ferch Rhodri ap Hwytell, [jay\\_wynne@hotmail.com](mailto:jay_wynne@hotmail.com)

Meets second Sunday of the month. Check calendar for location and time.

### Gold Key

To Access Gold Key garb, Contact Lady Wanda Ostojowna, [wlkinnie@comcast.net](mailto:wlkinnie@comcast.net)

Bright Hills Email List

To subscribe to the Bright Hills mailing list, please go to: <http://www.yahogroups.com/subscribe/brighthills>

## Electronic Connection

### Bright Hills Website

The Baronial website, <http://brighthills.atlantia.sca.org/> contains a listing of current officers, regularly scheduled meetings, events and other items of interest. If you have an item for the website, please send it to the Webminister,

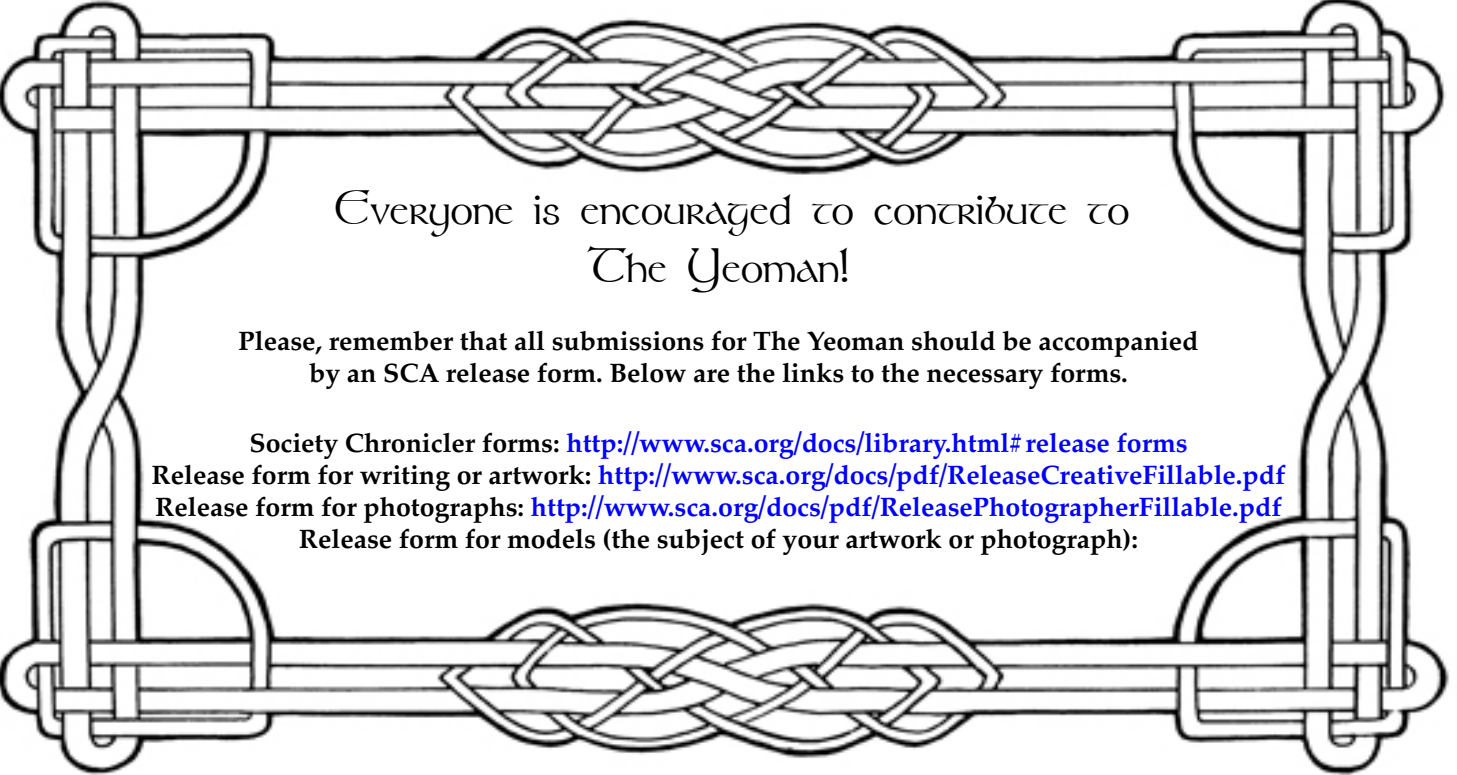
THL Janyn Fletcher of Lancastreschire at [janynfletcher@comcast.net](mailto:janynfletcher@comcast.net)

### Bright Hills FaceBook Page

The new baronial Facebook page is located at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/brighthills/>. Further information can be obtained from the administrators Lady Reyne Telarius at [robynbecker@comcast.net](mailto:robynbecker@comcast.net), THL Janyn Fletcher of Lancastreschire at [janynfletcher@comcast.net](mailto:janynfletcher@comcast.net) or Lady Aemilia Rosa at [aemiliarosa@comcast.net](mailto:aemiliarosa@comcast.net)

### The Yeoman On-Line

<http://brighthills.atlantia.sca.org/yeoman/yeoman.html>



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Release form for writing or artwork: <http://www.sca.org/docs/pdf/ReleaseCreativeFillable.pdf>  
Release form for photographs: <http://www.sca.org/docs/pdf/ReleasePhotographerFillable.pdf>  
Release form for models (the subject of your artwork or photograph):



# Officers and Deputies of the Barony of Bright Hills



















Please try not to call after 9 PM












Baron & Baroness  
Kollack & Rebecca von Zweckel  
Kenneth & Becky Kepple  
443.254.1206



baron@brighthills.atlantia.sca.org or baroness@brighthills.atlantia.sca.org

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**Arts and Sciences:** Lady Aemilia Rosa  
**Bardic:** Lady Tarquinia Maida  
**Baronial Warlord:** Lord Randvar Askmodr  
**Brewer:** Barun Gustav Emile der Dunkele Rotvogel

**Equestrian:** Rachel d'Alton  
**Heavy Weapons:** Lord Raphael  
**Rapier:** Milord Conrad Muni  
**Children's Archery-** M'Lord Pietre Witkowski

