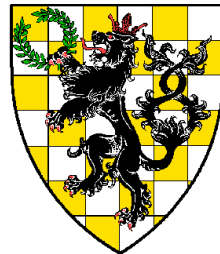
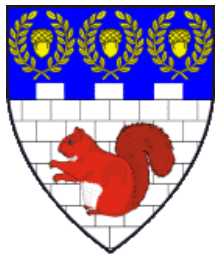


The Jousting Squirrel



March, Anno Societatis LVII (2023)

Newsletter for The Canton of Akornebir

A Branch of the Society for Creative Anachronism (SCA Inc.)

To gain a blade

Every Monday evening in the Canton of Akornebir, rapier fighters gather at Lord William's, not just for a weekly practice fight, but also for instruction and lessons straight from history. For a fifteen-to-twenty minute period before the fights begin, combatants learn Latin terms, battlefield stances, and mobile footwork. Recently, Honorable Lord James Elwyc has been teaching fighters about a crucial concept in combat: gaining the blade. So what exactly is gaining the opponent's weapon, and why does it matter?

"Gaining the sword is important for many reasons," James explained. "Multiple masters all talk about it, because it works. It is the most effective way to avoid a double kill."

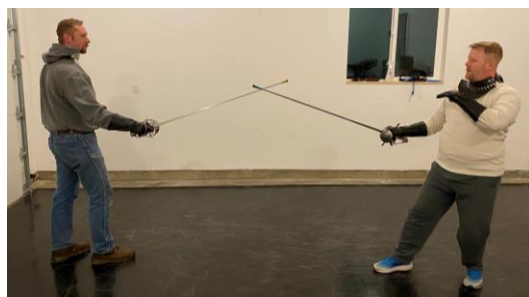
According to Giganti, gaining the sword means "situating your weapon in such a way that [your opponent] cannot perform an offensive action [and is] always performed with the true edge."

James continued, "It is the art of *defense* remember, not the art of kill them slightly quicker than your own death."

Gaining your enemy's blade means ensuring your blade is above theirs, crosses over it, and that the intersection point is closer to your hilt than theirs.

"It is the most effective way to control your opponent's options," added James. "It is the largest wrench in a rapier fighters toolkit."

He also taught fighters how to stand, because "An improvement in footwork will pay higher dividends than any other part of your fight."



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About the canton of Akornebir

The Canton of Akornebir is a branch of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. We are located at the foot of the Blue Mountains, in Walla Walla, Washington. Our area includes all of Walla Walla County and the Waitsburg/Dayton area. Akornebir became an official branch of the Society in June, 2001 (A.S. XXXVI).

Citizens of Akornebir have for many years been affectionately known as Squirrels.

The Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (SCA) is a non-profit group dedicated to researching and recreating the Middle Ages in the present.

The Canton of Akornebir is located in the Kingdom of An Tir (Irish translation: Our Land), in the area formerly known as the Inland Region. Locally, the Canton of Akornebir is a part of the Barony of Wastekeep. Its territory includes the Canton of Akornebir, and any 993xx zip codes within Benton, Franklin and Walla Walla counties and, through previous negotiations, including Grandview, which is in Yakima county.

The Barony of Wastekeep is ruled by our Baron and Baroness who act on the King's authority and hold the lands in their stead. Their Excellencies are pleased to grant Baronial Awards to worthy members of the populous and to challenge those who would apply to become one of Wastekeep's Sergeants.



Web Links

www.sca.org
www.sca.org/new-to-the-sca/

www.antir.org

www.akornebir.wastekeep.org
www.wastekeep.org

The Squirrel press

let it bead, let it bead

On Sunday, January 22, the Canton of Akornebir held their monthly scurry at the house of Honorable Lady Lucia Robertsdottir, where members focused on largesse and award necklaces for the barony.

Attendees included Baroness Gudrun and her sister, Liesl Keenan as well as HL Kaitlin, Baron Thorkell, Lord Cuthbert, and HL Lucia, with a special cameo from Lucia's charming dog Bo, who always loves making friends, and searching for dropped food. The group enjoyed a tasty potluck with soup made by Kaitlin, and set about their task to increase the barony's store of award necklaces, while trying not to drop too many beads on the floor, or accidentally cut the wrong part of their wire after already threading the necklace.

Watching everyone bead a unique necklace with a rainbow of different colors, shades, and textured beads made for a relaxing and fun afternoon, and it was satisfying to learn exactly how to crimp the end to close the loop.



Baron Thorkell fights the king

It's not every day you get to clash swords with a sovereign. The Kingdom of An Tir hosted both their Arts & Sciences and Queen's Rapier championships from February 24-26 in the Canton of Caladphort, within the Barony of Glymm Mere. The Canton of Akornebir was represented well in this contest of blades by one of our own Gallants of Wastekeep, Baron Thorkell Palsson, OP. The tournament featured 42 combatants split into four round robins, with eight semifinalists and an eventual winner.

"A hearty congratulations go out to those eight," shared Baron Thorkell, who is also provost to Master Kian O'Ruardhi, OoD, "and especially for Lord Aidan Conroy for winning the tournament."

"His Majesty, Athanasios, kitted up in rapier gear to take on all that wished to cross blades with him, even during down time and after the tournament had ended, and now I have photographic proof of me attempting to stab the king!"

Indiscrete concrete

An Arts & Sciences project by Cuthbert Weaver



Roman concrete has been one of the ancient world's most enduring and puzzling materials. Unlike modern concrete, the Roman concrete used in structures like the Pantheon lasts for millennia instead of merely fifty years.

My goal was to make a brick of Roman concrete using recipes from Vitruvius and as many of the original methods and materials as possible.

Starting with one ancient practice, I first tried superheating seashells in a firepit to reduce the limestone content into calcium oxide, but that failed, and so after purchasing calcium oxide online, I took the powder and mixed it with cold water. This created quicklime in an exothermic reaction that kicked out a massive amount of heat.

Next was grinding the volcanic stone into a fine ash-powder, which required wrapping the stones in cloth and pounding them with a hammer. This was also then ground into smaller parts using a mortar and pestle. Eventually, I needed to use electronic machinery as well.

Mixing the black volcanic ash and white quicklime creates a concrete-grey slush that hardens slowly overnight, but not before appearing like a strangely appealing Oreo-cookie crumble. Do not eat!



Verdict: My Roman concrete had the appearance I hoped for, but its brittleness meant that it would break at the first sign of pressure. Something had gone wrong with either the temperature, the amount of water, or not having the correct ash-to-quicklime ratio. My verdict? Do not hire me to build the Colosseum anytime soon!



Upcoming Canton Activities And regional events

Canton activities

- ❖ Fight practice each Monday @ 6pm at the home of William and Mathilda. Next practice on March 13, 2023.
- ❖ Next monthly Canton business meeting (virtual) on Thursday, March 2nd @ 6.30pm.
- ❖ Arts & Sciences Scurry during March to be announced. Inquire soon for more details and location.

regional events

- ❖ Oasis War: March 25 in Cranehaven (Wenatchee).
- ❖ Baroness War: April 14-16 in Vulcanfeldt (Yakima).
- ❖ Honor War: April 21-23 in Lyonsmarche (Pullman, WA & Moscow, ID).
- ❖ Spring Fest: June 9-11 in Waitsburg
- ❖ Sergeant Trials: August 18-20 in Waitsburg

IN SERVICE TO THE CANTON: AN INTERVIEW WITH A GENTLE

Jousting Squirrel: What is your name, position and title in the SCA, and how long have you been involved?

Honorable Lady Lucia: HL Lucia Robertsdottir, Protege to Vinnu Kona Kara Reginasdottir; aquari to Archos Ronan Mackay. I'm the current seneschal for the Canton, and current Kingdom Social Media Deputy. I have been in the SCA for about 6 years.

JS: What is one of your favorite ways to give back and provide service in the SCA?

HLL: I really enjoy the behind the scenes things: event planning, volunteering for various positions at events, retinue, etc. I have an extensive case of "helium hand".

JS: What advice would you give to someone who wants to help out within their canton or barony?

HLL: Start small. This is an exciting thing to be a part of with so many hobbies within! It is so easy to want to jump in and do all of the things. However, it can also be very overwhelming.

Ask questions, don't be shy, and most of all have fun!



In service to the Canton: an interview with a gentle

JS: What are some of the less visible and less glamorous parts of service in the SCA?

HLL: Hmm, that is a tough one. I personally don't volunteer for the recognition or to be seen as glamorous. I do it for the love of the game, and the desire to see the SCA continue on. Volunteers are the only way that is going to happen! However, many don't see the people that are picking up garbage at site following an event, hauling trailers and castles back to their homes, or even stirring up or cleaning out the biffies! (Don't ask...)

JS: As a registered charitable non-profit, how does SCA provide service and education to the people of Akornebir, here in the Walla Walla valley?

HLL: Something that I have always like is how welcoming many members are of newcomers, those people walking through an event "naked" with wide eyes and a lot of questions. We were all one of those people at one time and someone came up and started talking to us, invited us to sit around their campfire or table and offered garb to try on, or armor to try on so they could fight.

JS: Who have you seen demonstrate service especially well in the SCA?

HLL: There are so many to choose from! I think it is extremely difficult to be a part of the SCA and not be service oriented.

JS: Where are you heading next from Akornebir, and do you have plans to do any SCA activities in your new home?

HLL: I am moving to Okanogan County, which is considered "King's Land" in An Tir. I do plan on continuing my path as a protege. It has been so crazy living in between two places and all of the traveling. It will be nice to be settled, get my craft/sewing room setup and refocus!



More Camton photos



BOOK review

The Pillars of the Earth

By Ken Follett

Review by Cuthbert Weaver

The Pillars of the Earth is a best-selling novel set in 12th-century England in the fictional cathedral town of Kingsbridge, and while this is indeed a lengthy book, at no point was I not enthralled by its incredible cast of heroes and villains, the court and church intrigue, the combat, the romance, and the tragedy. I had been meaning to read this 30-year-old book for a long time now, and it was exactly what I had hoped for: a real page-turner that you don't ever want to put down.

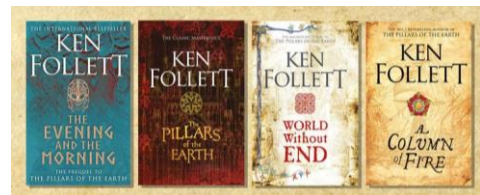
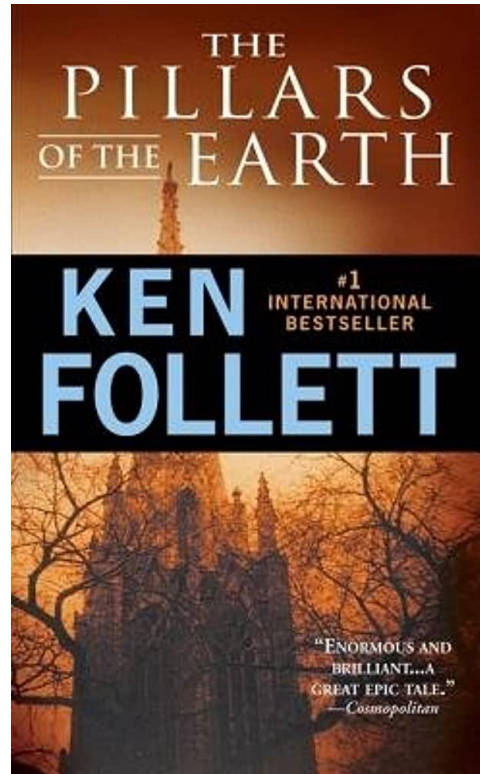
This generation-spanning epic is one of several in a series set in the same town over hundreds of years, but *Pillars* was originally intended to be read as a standalone story.

The tale follows the impoverished family of Tom Builder and his quest to design and construct a great cathedral. In cooperation with the intelligent and beautiful noblewoman Aliana, and the courageous monk in charge of the monastery Prior Phillip, they must together overcome cruel knights, foolish kings, greedy bishops, devastating famines, and a civil war, to finish their grand church and bring peace and prosperity to a community.

As a highly educational text, it also provides a glimpse into the transition from Romanesque to Gothic architecture, the Norman Anarchy period, monastic routines, and everyday village life during the Middle Ages.

There's really just nothing else like it. It's a masterpiece, a time-machine made of paper.

Review Score: ★★★★★



Canton of Akornebir SCA Business Meeting (virtual)

Minutes

Thursday, February 2, 2023



In Attendance: Thorkell, Cuthbert, Tova, Kaitlin, Galina, Gudrun, Kathy

1. Meeting called to order at 6:35 p.m.
2. Minutes from the January meeting were approved
3. Officer's Reports
 - a. Baron & Baroness
 - i. Nothing to report
 - b. Seneschal (Not present)
 - i. Nothing to report
 - c. Chronicler
 - i. *Jousting Squirrel* canton newsletter to be published later this month
 - ii. Minutes will be posted on Facebook in a timely fashion
 - d. Exchequer
 - i. Current balance \$XXXX.XX
 - ii. Report was already in and nothing outstanding
 - e. Marshall (Not present)
 - i. Adding 15-minute lessons to our fight practice
 - ii. Each Monday night is fight practice
 - iii. Suggestion to do something to thank Lord William for hosting this winter
 - f. Arts & Sciences
 - i. We made necklaces at the recent scurry
 - ii. We now have the pewter to make the medallions
 - iii. No scurry this weekend, looking at a date for one soon
 - iv. Kingdom Arts & Sciences coming up soon – Thorkell, Kaitlin, and Cuthbert all going
 - v. Let Gudrun know about projects
 - g. Herald
 - i. Nothing to report
 - h. Chatelaine
 - i. Nothing to report
 - i. Webminister (Not present)
 - i. Progress on website seems to be advancing
 - ii. Gentleman from Vulcanfeldt looking at the rough draft
 - iii. Need to switch domain back to the kingdom

- j. Social Media
 - i. Baronial and Canton Facebook pages getting spammed
 - ii. Watch out for scamming and spamming
 - iii. Maybe make a screenshot to show others
- 4. Upcoming Events
 - a. Springfest
 - i. Kaitlin said she is hoping to make progress and should have a budget soon.
 - ii. The city should know soon about dates: June 9 to 11
 - iii. Need the city special-use permit which costs \$100
 - b. Sergeants
 - i. August 18-20 in Waitsburg Park
 - ii. Kathy will do the city forms for both Sergeants and Springfest
 - c. Unlikely to have a Canton group make it to Feat of the Snow Moon in Wealdsmere
- 5. Old Business
 - a. Thorkell will get *As You Like It* onto the calendar
 - b. Newcomer's
 - i. Still no date
 - ii. There was a motion (and second) to skip Newcomer's for 2023
 - iii. There was not a vote and we tabled the decision for a later time
 - iv. We discussed having the July demo at the Renaissance Fair be equivalent to Newcomer's
- 6. Next Gatherings
 - a. Need to find a date for another scurry
 - b. Next canton business meeting March 2
- 7. Meeting Adjourned just after 7pm

End of Minutes



Legal notice

The Jousting Squirrel is a publication of the Canton of Akornebir, part of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (SCA, Inc.). *The Jousting Squirrel* is available at akornebir.wastekeep.org and on our Facebook group discussion page, or can be received on an email mailing list by writing to the Akornebir Chronicler: Cuthbert Weaver at mgsurridge@gmail.com

The Jousting Squirrel is written & designed by Cuthbert Weaver.

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CANTON CURIA

- ❖ Seneschal – Honorable Lady Lucia Robertsdottir
- ❖ Herald – Baron Thorkell Palsson, OP
- ❖ Exchequer – Baron Thorkell Palsson
- ❖ Chronicler – Lord Cuthbert Weaver
- ❖ Marshal – Lord William Le Navetier
- ❖ Arts & Science – Baroness Gudrun Ulriksdottir, OP
- ❖ Webminister – Honorable Lord Ramone de Leon
- ❖ Chatelaine – Honorable Lady Livia Della Strada



BARONIAL CURIA

- ❖ Seneschal – Honorable Lady Ciosa
- ❖ Exchequer – Honorable Lady Anna
- ❖ Martial – Honorable Lord William
- ❖ Arts & Science – Lady Sunneva



KINGDOM MONARCHS

- ❖ King of An Tir – King Athanasios Belisarios
- ❖ Queen of An Tir – Queen Alianora Grey Moor

