



## Gryphon's Keep News Letter

*"The Beak & Talon"*

Issue #6 (Apr 07)

Hail and well met Household of Gryphon's Keep. First I would like to say congratulations to the household and happy anniversary. We are now over one year old! Our numbers have held steady currently with 6 members, though I will take quality over quantity any day. Our household is well represented throughout the SCA. Geoffrey is the Chatelaine and I am Deputy Seneschal for our local shire of Phoenix Glade, Larian (now Lord Larian) is the Seneschal for Warriors Gate, and Roland is just a damn good fighter as well as an excellent mouthpiece at Demos (more on that later). Godfrey is off getting an education and Nick is off defending our country in Korea and though not medieval pursuits both are noble endeavors. I am very proud to be a member of Gryphon's Keep and proud of all our fine Warriors!

If you would like to contribute to next month's news letter please e-mail me at [armsofvalor@earthlink.net](mailto:armsofvalor@earthlink.net)

Strength in Unity,

Thomas Alfred  
Steward of Gryphon's Keep

### **What happened since the last news letter?**

**More things than I can remember, so I will take my best shot at capturing what I can remember.**

**Household Dinner** – With everyone's busy schedules we don't get to do it often, but we did manage to hold a household gathering/dinner at the Bitburger in February during Larian's mid tour break from Korea. It was attended by every household member except for Godfrey who could not make it up from school in Orlando. My man-at-arms brother Kail also made it all the way from Panama City. During dinner we joked, drank, feasted, and had a good time, but also made time to take care of some Gryphon's Keep business. Lord Larian was inducted into the Order of the Sable Gryphon and a motion was made to make the household a warrior household. The motion was passed with a unanimous vote. We are now a warrior household! What does that mean? Our primary function is to develop our skill in arms allowing us to protect the weak and strive to become a

renowned fighting unit throughout the land. Our goal is to have people say, “Oh Sh&%”, when they see our gold Gryphon boldly emblazoned on shield, surcoat, or belt sash.

**Gulf Wars** – Geoffrey and I both made it to Gulf Wars though at different times. This was my first major event in many years and Geoffrey’s first major event within the SCA. I think I speak for both of us when I say it was eye opening to be on the field of battle with 1,000 or more other warriors. If you want a full account of the battles we were in just ask us. I will even draw maps and diagrams as well as use sound effects to relate my experiences.

**Saturday in the Park** – This event just occurred last weekend and is the freshest in my mind. The event was extremely successful and one that we will definitely be doing again next year. Out of the four fighters in attendance three were Gryphon’s Keep (Geoffrey, Roland, and me). Everything went as planned. We set up our medieval encampment early in the morning which included the household Pavilion as well as arms, armor, and a variety of other medieval accouterments. Throughout the morning we answered questions and let the crowd try on armor and heft the weapons. Roland was a natural with the crowd and gave lessons on how to “hamstring” an opponent with his glaive.



At 1215 we put on our fighting demo, which consisted of four fighters (Geoffrey, Roland, Refr, and me). Geoffrey and I took turns announcing. We did some one on one then two on two and then ended with Roland and me doing some one on one to fill up our allotted time. With only four fighters the heat took its toll, but if I have a chance to get in armor I will fight until I can’t stand. We ended the demo with a nice double kill, which was well received by the crowd. The rest of the afternoon was then spent answering questions again.

As I said before the demo went extremely well and we are already making plans to make it even better next year.

## **Up and coming events:**

Ft Walton Beach Library Demo – 19 May

Shire Event – August 07

## **Fealty in the SCA**

- The following was taken from an article posted about SCA fealty. It was sent to me by Lord Brennan when I became his man-at-arms to explain what I was getting myself into. Within the household of Gryphon's Keep we do not push this issue and allow each member to choose their own level of devotion to our household. I wanted to share this article so that you can think about what it means to be a member of our household as well as consider the brotherhood that we share. - - Thomas Alfred

**Fealty is a very complex, interlocking structure of oaths, obligations and loyalties that enables a feudalistic form of social structure to work.**

**From a study of medieval law and history we see that fealty is primarily a -contract- between two persons or entities. The act of entering into this contract is called "doing homage." Each party in the contract promises certain things to the other, and *if this contract is violated, then the fealty can be "de-fiefed" or "de-fied" with no penalties nor legal difficulties; there is no "felony," in the medieval legal sense of the word.***

**Fealty comes in three basic forms. All of them are -conditional.- In order for them to be operative, each party must fulfill certain pre-set conditions.**

**The first, and most well-known, is exemplified by the oath sworn by a Knight to the Crown. This is called LIEGE FEALTY, and is a promise of -absolute- service and obedience to the Crown of his Kingdom, or to an individual person. The Crown, or the individual person, in turn promises to defend that liegeman's "rights and privileges," and in general to be an honorable Lord to that vassal. One swears this kind of fealty -once.- Any other re-swearing of it is simply a renewal, or re-affirmation of the fealty, and should not be required of anyone, but merely optional.**

**The second is "SIMPLE FEALTY," and is merely a pledge of loyalty by the fief-holder to his or her Lord. This can mean any number of things, from pretty much absolute obedience, to specified services from both parties. We can see a form of this in the standard marriage vows that are taken in the mundane world.**

**The third is "SERVICE FEALTY," being an oath of -service- to the Lord, with no -personal- obligations attached. This is the oath that Officers of an SCA branch can take with (usually) no legal complications with any other fealties they might have. This is the only thing I expect of my Apprentices and Proteges, and I consider it to specifically exempt any liege- fealty that might be required of them by any Crown or Coronet (though if they wish to swear liege-fealty to me, I will accept it .... after**

trying to talk them out of it!) This type of fealty will be shown to be very significant later in this article.

When someone swears "service," they are simply promising to do a job that is required of them. They are -not- swearing absolute loyalty, nor liege fealty. They are simply taking an "oath of office," if you will.

Read more at: <http://members.tripod.com/~whitebard/onfealty.htm>

To see past news letters please go to:

<http://www.gryphonskeep.org/page1002.html>