



Gryphon's Keep News Letter

"The Beak & Talon"

Issue #4 (Jul 06)

Hail and well met Household of Gryphon's Keep. Welcome to the 4th issue of the household news letter. We have continued to loose members to deployments and college, but are able to communicate through the Household Forum or Shire Group until they return. Though our numbers are weak temporarily, our long term prospects are looking good. Within the next year most will have returned stronger and re-energized to proudly spread the fame of our good household on the battle field, at feast, and in court. If you would like to contribute to next months news letter please e-mail me at armsofvalor@earthlink.net

Strength in Unity,

Thomas Alfred
Steward of Gryphon's Keep

What happened in July?

Arabian Nights occurred the first weekend in July, but was covered in June's news letter.

Attended Arenal Fighter Practice – Roland and I (Thomas) made the trek to Arenal for their fighter practice on the 23rd. We were honored to provide Kail (new Shire member) with transportation to the practice. This was Kail's first exposure to the SCA and our first opportunity to get him hooked. We did manage to get him in armor, which was difficult due to the fact that he is 6'6" tall! The household loaner armor did fit him (not well mind you) except for the helm, however, we did manage to find one that fit and get him swinging a stick. He was instantly hooked and has since attended a second fighter practice within our Shire.

As always the good folks of Arenal welcomed us with open arms and provided good combat and a lot of tips. Roland and I got to fight each other for a few rounds to the end of practice and I had the pleasure of becoming intimately acquainted w rattan.



Temporary farewell to two more members – Larian and Godfrey have both left us temporarily. Larian just left for a year long remote to Korea and Godfrey is spending two years at film school. Larian has taken his armor and found a local group. After a year of training with no family diversions he should come back to us as a hardened warrior.

We also bid a sad farewell to Michael of Southampton - one of the three original founding fathers of the household, Michael will be sorely missed. He was the tip of the sword in the development of our by-laws and spent many hours working on the household banner. His dedication was an inspiration to all of us as we struggled to create a place of strength and unity. It was his drive that helped the Phoenix flameout and rise again from the ashes. Each warrior has his own path to tread and Michael left a blazing trail in his wake. Now he is on a different path from ours, but I hope our paths will cross or even join again in the future.

Up and coming events:

GATALOP XXIII by Barony of the Osprey - Oct 27th - 29th

Historical Article

Since Kail is leaning towards a Viking persona I wanted to dedicate this historical article to the Vikings. Though we are an English household we accept fighters and mercenaries from all cultures and countries. Hell, we even accepted Larian a flamboyant Italian mercenary who bleeds wine instead of blood. Here's to Kail the 6'6" Viking!

“The [Vikings attacked Britain's holy places, slaughtered the monks who lived there and carried away countless treasures. Well designed boats and convenient winds helped these raiders to come and go as they pleased. Britain was devastated - but what could be done against such ferocity?](#)”



Terror from the sea

A short entry in the 'Anglo-Saxon Chronicle' describes how in 789 three Viking ships arrived on Britain's Wessex shore. The local reeve was sent to greet them, but he was killed on the spot. Unfortunately for the British, this was a harbinger of worse things to come.

Four years later, Lindisfarne (Holy Island), a monastery on an island just off Northumbrian coast, was sacked. The monastery was revered for its link with Cuthbert more than a century earlier, and was one of Britain's most sacred



The first Viking raids were hit-and-run affairs. There was no co-ordination and no long-term plan behind them. Raids were not even a new hazard in a society well-used to warfare on every scale - from local skirmishes to great battles. The Vikings' great sin in this case, however, was to attack and pillage one of the most sacred places of the Christian world.

The leaders of that world were quick to condemn them, and one of those leaders, whose words have fortunately come down to us, was Alcuin of York.

'Lo, it is nearly 350 years that we and our fathers have inhabited this most lovely land, and never before has such terror appeared in Britain as we have now suffered from a pagan race, nor was it thought that such an inroad from the sea could be made. Behold the church of St Cuthbert spattered with the blood of the priests of God, despoiled of all its ornaments; a place more venerable than all in Britain is given as a prey to pagan peoples ...'. *Letter from Alcuin of York to Ethelred, king of Northumbria, 8 June, 793.*

To read more please go to:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/trail/conquest/viking/loot_01.shtml

To see past news letters please go to:

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

