



## Gryphon's Keep News Letter

*"The Beak & Talon"*

Issue #2 (May 06)

Once again hail and well met Household of Gryphon's Keep. Another month has passed and the heat of summer is upon us rather more rapidly than I am used to. I would personally like to welcome Refr Skummson and his lady Juliana verch Hoell as friends and allies to our humble household. Their knowledge and wisdom will be much appreciated as we continue to strengthen our numbers and fighting prowess. As always, if you would like to contribute for next months news letter please e-mail me at [armsofvalor@earthlink.net](mailto:armsofvalor@earthlink.net)

Strength in Unity,

Thomas Alfred  
Steward of Gryphon's Keep

### **Exciting News for the Household**

Seems the Household itself has managed to catch the attention of Kingdom level officers. On Monday, May15th, the Baroness Fianna nic Dhaibhidh, Seneschale of Meridies contacted Larian, Thomas, Michael, and Geoffrey. Of particular note was a passage in her correspondence that leads me to believe that we are indeed on the right track with the household: **"In looking over your website and reading through the forums, your energy and enthusiasm for all of your hobbies is very apparent. You have put quite a lot of work into developing Gryphon's Keep. From all that I have seen, it is evident that in welcoming you as new members, Phoenix Glade has much to look forward to."**

The main thing that I wanted to stress out of this passage is that we as a Household are upholding the traditions of the SCA in welcoming new members to this activity, and that we continue to be positive ambassadors for the SCA. Only by continuing to be a warm and welcoming organization do we prove our worth as a Household as opposed to some sort of elitist snobs that would sooner turn away someone than accept them. In accepting those who wish to participate in the SCA, and continuing to be friendly and welcoming, we not only improve the position of the SCA, but our fame as a Household will continue to grow.

Keep up the good work, and remember that if you see anyone with interest in the SCA, we will gladly give them a place to rest their feet and tell a tale or two.

FOR VALOR!  
Larian LeQuella

## What happened in May?

May 06 turned out to be a rather quite month for household activities. However, we did make great strides in connecting with new and old SCA members in our geographic area! Gryphon's Keep has established many new friends and allies across the land and the increase in participation and interest has been apparent. A significant **Shire Fighter Practice was held on May 21<sup>st</sup>** (though the Shire has fighter practice every Sunday) this one was a significant milestone as it had an increased number of new faces and fighters in attendance.

**Temporary Farewell!** We bid a temporary farewell to **Geoffrey** as he is taken away from us for a work related venture. You will be missed, have a safe journey and return to us soon.

## Up and coming events:

**June 25<sup>th</sup>** – Household Event – please contact Thomas for details on time and place  
(Fighting, archery, feasting, armoring, historical swordplay, and discussions)

**June 30<sup>th</sup>, July 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>** – Arabian Knights Pensacola Florida

**July 20<sup>th</sup>** – Household Event (more details to follow)



# Knights in the SCA

As most of you know our household of Gryphon's Keep is based on an English household 1200 – 1400 A.D. Our time frame and location conjure images of colorful banners flowing in the breeze, glittering chainmail, and swords bright and sharp. It was the age when knights were more than mortal men and real life heroes such as William Marshal rode into battle inspiring his knights to greater glory. Where are the modern day knights? In the current Middle Ages who do we look to for leadership and guidance? Currently our household does not have an SCA Knight or Peer as the head of the household. Even without the guidance of a Peer our household is developing into the

group that I had envisioned when it was founded. Each of our members has a strong sense of Chivalry and Honor and the primary goal of achieving the ideals of Knighthood. This leads to the question, "How does one become a knight in the SCA?" Through research I have come to the conclusion that the level of commitment required to become an SCA Knight is out of reach of most (as it should be) but not unobtainable.

It is said that the tradition of obtaining knighthood within the SCA is over 30 years old.

*"In the SCA only the King can confer a knighthood. But the king must himself be a knight. There is a legend that one of the early SCA knights was himself a 'real' knight, and some have used this to validate all knights made since that date. I cannot ascertain the truth of this belief, but for me it doesn't matter. I know of many within the SCA whose character and demeanor, both inside the Society and out, that they are knights in the pursuit of the ideal sense of the word. I know others who wear the white belt but who I cannot in good faith consider knights--I believe the same could be said for any group of men laying claim to the title in any time period."* (Brian R. Price AKA SCA Brion Thornbird ap Rhys, Earl & Knight, OL January 24<sup>th</sup>, 1998)

The SCA website has a detailed account of how to become a Knight within the SCA. It is a very long list and not one I can throw into the news letter. I would like to pull out an excerpt that may help get you started on the path.

***"The candidate must be considered the equal of his or her prospective peers with the basic weapons of tournament combat. "***

*"It pretty much starts and ends there for the prospective knight: how good can you swing a stick? You can be the nicest, most courteous and chivalric person in the world, but if you can't fight well then you won't be a member of the order [NOTE: the rule is, "All knights are good fighters, but not all good fighters are knights. There are exceptions to every rule, including this one; thankfully, they're rare.]*

*How is this measured? You may be asking.*

*By the number of tournament wins? Nope, you don't have to win lots to be a knight. Invariably, knights tend to win more tournaments because of their skill and years of experience. But by no means is it a requirement of entry to the order. Tournament wins are more of a barometer of your effectiveness on the field. Winning tournaments will increase your renown and get you and your consort noticed, thereby contributing to the overall package of knighthood. But please rest assured that victory is not the be all and end all.*

*Look to the current crop of knights around the Kingdom. No two fight alike. True, there are similarities between some of the styles, but by and large every knight fights differently. And every one of those knights has a different opinion as to what makes a good fighter based on how they themselves fight. Style, effectiveness, tournament wins, flamboyancy, control, efficiency, economy of motion, fun factor and even authenticity (with respect to following period texts such as [Talhoffer](#) and [Silver](#)), all*

*of these and many more besides are looked at when considering a prospective candidate. But while a bar may be in place for aspiring knights to reach, please remember that you should fight for its own sake, and let the accolade of knighthood be icing on that combat cake. If you're having fun fighting, any rewards you receive as a result are incidental.”* (Vladimir Ivanovich Kurgan (Jeff Blanchard) KSCA, etc.)

To see the whole article you can go to:

[http://www.sca.org.au/chivalry/articles/Vlad\\_Best\\_Way.html](http://www.sca.org.au/chivalry/articles/Vlad_Best_Way.html)

It appears that the path to becoming a Knight within the SCA starts with a stick in hand. I would like to echo the words of Sir Vladimir, “*you should fight for its own sake, and let the accolade of knighthood be icing on that combat cake.*” I hope to see all of you on the field of battle for the love of the fight. It will bring me great honor and pride to eventually see one of you become a knight! (Thomas Alfred)