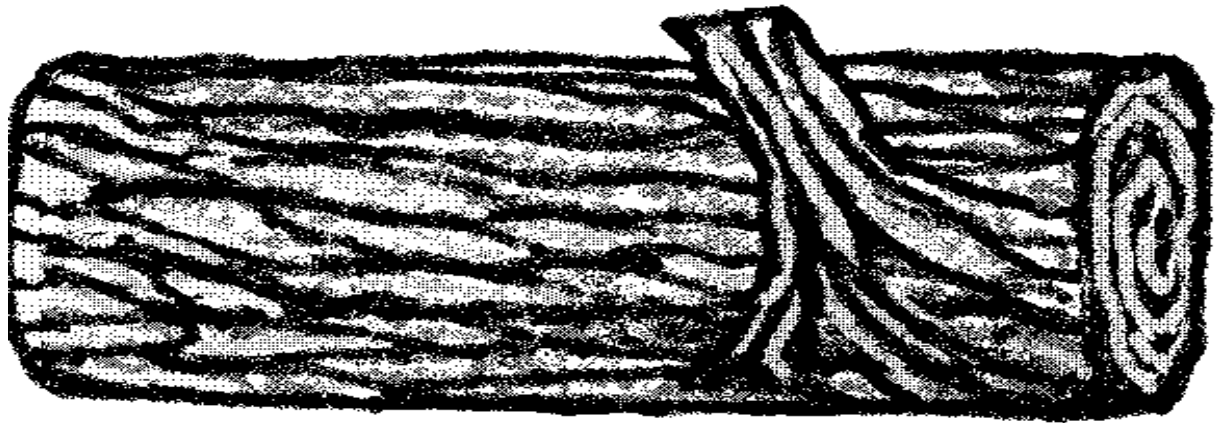


Cat Tales

Newsletter of the Incipient Canton of Catteden

Winter 2005



Happy Winter Solstice Everyone

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Meeting Times

Catteden meets every other Thursday at 7 p.m. Meeting places vary, so check on our website, www.catteden.com for locations and any changes to meeting days and times.

Fighter Practice

Contact our Knight's Marshal, Skip Setzer, at (419) 266-8109 for days and times of practices.

This is the Winter 2005, issue of Cat Tales, the official newsletter of the Incipient Canton of Catteden; a branch of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. Cat Tales is available from Carla Ferryman, 20602 Twp. Rd. 179, Ridgeway, Ohio 43345 or ferrymanc@yahoo.com. It is not a corporate publication of SCA, Inc., and does not delineate SCA, Inc. policies.

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Calendar of Events

Exchequer

Greetings to the populace of Catteden,

First let me thank everyone that contributed both physically and financially to Pounce 4. Every one who helped should be greatly pleased with the progress we have made in hosting what has become an outstanding event. As for the financial report, we made out very well at Pounce 4. After the expenses and donations were calculated, we have \$545.50 as the proceeds from pounce 4. Many compliments and congratulations were conveyed concerning this year's event. We all should have a nice pat on the back. Thank you everyone.

Yours in service,

Iosobail inghean Uilliam mhic Leoid
Exchequer of the Incipient Canton of Catteden

Chronicler

Greetings,









I hope everyone is in good health and keeping warm. The Spring 2006 issue of Cat Tales is slated for publication in March. As you work on your A & S projects, attend events and such give a little thought to sending in an article on your progress or what happened at the events, etc. If you have a topic you're interested in seeing an article about, send me an email and I'll put it on my list.

Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukah, Happy Winter Solstice, Happy Kwanzaa, Happy Candlemas, etc., etc; you get the idea, be happy during this holiday season.






Yours in Service,

Katarina D'Cava
Chronicler of the Incipient Canton of Catteden



January 2006

- 1 - **PALE DEADLINE FOR FEBRUARY 2006**
- 7 - Barony Flaming Gryphon 12th Night {Flaming Gryphon} [Springfield, OH]
- Shadowed Stars Twelfth Night {Fort Wayne, IN} [46805]
-     [Twelfth Night](#) {Ealdnordwuda (Northwoods)} [Lansing, MI]
- 8 -  [Pentamere Open 6](#) {Roaring Wastes} [Ferndale, MI]
- 14 - [Twelfth Fight](#) {Rimsholt} [Grand Rapids, MI]
- 21 -  [Festival of Maidens XXXIII](#) {Wurm Wald} [Urbana, IL]
-  [Winter Revel](#) {Three Walls} [Ionia, MI]
- 28 - [12th Night](#) {Tree-Girt-Sea} [Chicago, IL]
- Donnershafen 12th Night {Donnershafen} [Mancelona, MI]
-  [Regular Event in Cleftlands: A Day of Chivalry and Romance](#) {Cleftlands} [Cleveland, OH]
- Winter Demo {Talonval} [Jackson, MI]

February 2006

- 1 - **PALE DEADLINE FOR MARCH 2006**
- 4 -   Candlemas 19 {Dragonsmark & Val d'Azur} [Lexington, KY]
- 11 -   [Val Day](#) {Three Hills} [Kalamazoo, MI]
- White Knights III - the Next Boyer {Dark River} [Moline, IL]
- 14-20 -  [Estrella War XXII](#) {Atenveldt} [Goodyear, AZ]
- 17-18 - SCA Extreme Makeover II {al Ja'far (Sternfeld)} [Lebanon, IN]
- 18 - [Masque of Courtly Love 9.1](#) {Alderford} [Canton, OH]
- Youth Fighting Symposium {Greyhope} [Lake Station, IN]
- 24-25 - Quest for the Golden Seamstress {Roaring Wastes} [Dearborn, MI]
- 24-26 - [10th Annual Tournament of the White Heart](#) {Port Oasis} [Huntington, WV]
- 25 - Winter's End {Fenix} [Cincinnati, OH]

March 2006

- 1 - **PALE DEADLINE FOR APRIL 2006**
- 4 -  Ceilidh {St. Joan} [Dayton, OH]
- Constellation Regional A&S Faire {White Waters} [Elkhart, IN]
- 11 - Ides of March {Iron Oak (Northwoods)} [Lansing, MI]
- 12-19 -  Gulf Wars {Gleann Abhann} [Lumberton, MS]
- 18 - Better War Through Archery {Sternfeld} [Indianapolis, IN]
- 25 - Rites of Spring {Illiton} [Sparland, IL]
- Spring R.U.M./War Collegium {Brendoken} [Smithville, OH]

Celebrating Candlemas

By
Carla Ferryman

Candlemas isn't widely celebrated in modern times or at least not by that name. We, Americans, have renamed it Groundhog Day, dropped all religious connotations connected with Candlemas and retained only the superstition regarding weather prediction. However, the history of Candlemas, its traditions and celebrations, has survived in small sections of the population, mainly among Orthodox Christians and modern neopagans.

Orthodox Christians celebrate Candlemas as the day Jesus was brought to the temple for his "redemption," as Mary and Joseph's firstborn, the day that the Virgin Mary was allowed to return to the temple for her ritual purification under Mosaic law and the Feast of Light, which is the prophecy of Simeon where he referred to Jesus as the Child of Light. They celebrate Mary's obedience to God by following the Mosaic laws applying to firstborn children and new mothers and the prophecy that Jesus will enlighten the Gentiles. Candlemas ceremonies include the blessing of candles for use in the church and at home, the procession of lighted candles into the church before mass and at home in the evening it is the last and best time to take down the Christmas tree and put away the holiday decorations.

Neopagans celebrate the day because it is mid-way between the Winter Solstice and the Spring Equinox. They place a candle in every window of the house and let it burn through the night until the sun rises the next day. For those who still make their own candles, it is considered the best day to make and bless all the candles that they will use over the course of the next year. They also use the weather on this day to forecast the length of time it will be before spring weather arrives. The superstition holds that if the weather is good on that day there will be more wintry weather to come, if the weather is bad, then spring is just around the corner.

Depending on your beliefs, Candlemas is either celebrated on February 2nd or 14th. Orthodox Christians are split on this due to the theological difference of their adopted calendars; the eastern Orthodox Christians using the Julian and the western Orthodox Christians using the Gregorian. Neopagan celebrations also vary between the two dates, though not for the same reason. The Pagan Festival of Lights includes the celebrations of Imbolc, Bridgit's Day, Oimeic and Lupercalia.

Imbolc, "in the belly," is the celebration of the growth of the seed planted in the Mother Earth's womb during Winter Solstice. Oimeic means literally, "milk of ewes." These days celebrate the great mother becoming the young goddess maiden again. Bridgit's day celebrates the great goddess of Ireland. She was considered a goddess of fire, patroness of smithcraft, poetry, and healing. Lupercalia, an ancient Roman fertility festival, has evolved into the neopagans' version of Valentine's Day, though they focus on the carnal frivolity rather than the romantic notions most people associate with the day.

By looking at the history of Candlemas we get a better idea of how important this celebration was in medieval times. As medieval enthusiasts we should ask ourselves the following questions:

How would my SCA persona have celebrated Candlemas? Would I have joined a candlelit procession to mass to have my candles blessed and then returned home afterwards to take down the Christmas decorations or would I have made and blessed my candles at home and performed rites of spiritual cleansing, protection, purification and fertility or would I have done both, just to make sure I was covered on all religious and superstitious fronts?

Answering these questions will give you more details about how your persona lived and insight into their beliefs, making them more real for you and other members of the SCA.

What type warrior persona best fits you?

Are you struggling with your search for an SCA persona? Here's a quiz that may help.

- 1.) If confronted on the road to the local tavern by two rough looking men, you would:
 - a.) Ease your hand onto the hilt of your sword, look them in the eye and inquire if they have a desire to, "make your day."
 - b.) Charge them, brandishing your sword, yelling at the top of your lungs, "Die filthy wretches!"
 - c.) Give them a hearty slap on the back and invite them to accompany you to the tavern to discuss a business proposition.
- 2.) When engaged in battle, you:
 - a.) are totally focused, your sword, body, and mind are one weapon.
 - b.) can taste the blood of your enemy and it brings you great pleasure.
 - c.) think of how much you can get for your enemy's horse, armor, and weapons once you've defeated them.
- 3.) Between skirmishes, you and your brothers-at-arms prefer:
 - a.) refining your warrior skills in practice drills.
 - b.) to raid neighboring land for livestock and women.
 - c.) to drink heartily at the local tavern.
- 4.) When asked about your parentage, you:
 - a.) proudly declare your noble lineage.
 - b.) regale the person with stories of your ancestors' heroic deeds.
 - c.) give the person a quizzical look and ask them if that's a new type of siege engine.
- 5.) The most important person in a warrior's life is:
 - a.) the overlord.
 - b.) the chieftain.
 - c.) the man with the most money.
- 6.) As a warrior, you consider your most valuable asset to be:
 - a.) your education.
 - b.) your sword skills.
 - c.) your physical strength.
- 7.) If given the choice to surrender or die, you would choose to:
 - a.) fight to the death.
 - b.) surrender.
 - c.) try to negotiate a new alliance.
- 8.) In your mundane youth you were:
 - a.) a Boy Scout.
 - b.) a bully.
 - c.) a choir boy.
- 9.) When packing for a journey, you prefer to:
 - a.) take more than what you will probably need.
 - b.) take only the bare essentials.
 - c.) to take empty sacks, you'll need them to haul all your loot home.
- 10.) The highest honor you can think of is:
 - d.) serving your God.
 - e.) serving your king.
 - f.) being paid in full, plus receiving a substantial bonus for services rendered.

Give yourself two points for each question answered with the letter a, three points for each b, and one point for each c.

Add up your total score and look on the next page to find out which warrior persona best fits you.

The Evolution of the Yule Log

By
Michelle Murnahan

With the holiday season upon us, our thoughts turn to loved ones and family traditions. As our families and the times change, so do our traditions. One of the oldest Christmas customs, the burning of the Yule log, is a good example of how radically a tradition can change over time.

The burning of ceremonial logs has been documented in Northwestern Europe, Siberia, Yugoslavia, Greece, and even in ancient Egypt as far back as 5000 B.C. Scandinavians burned a log during their winter solstice celebrations, one of which was "Jol," in honor of Jolnir also known as Odin.

A Yule log was never purchased; it had to be cut from your own lands or given to you by a neighbor. It ranged in size from a large log to a whole tree. The ceremony for bringing in the Yule log included singing songs and in some places, carrying it around the house a specific number of times before taking it into the home.

Once inside it was decorated with ritual offerings, i.e. grain, evergreens, gold, silk, cider and wine. Unmarried girls would lace bands of ribbon among the decorations and whomever's ribbon caught fire first would be the next maid to be married.

Each year the newly decorated log was started with a piece of the previous Yule log. Only clean hands could light the log and it had to catch fire on the first try in order to ensure prosperity for the household. It was also believed that any bad choices or mistakes made throughout the previous year were burnt with the Yule log, which allowed everyone a fresh start in the New Year.

Superstitions also surrounded the ashes and charred remains of a Yule log. A piece was kept in the house during the year to keep the home safe from fire and lightening. The ashes were scattered upon fields to bring a good harvest, in wells to purify/sweeten the water, and made into charms to ward off hailstorms, bring the wearer fertility, and to keep livestock healthy.

As time passed and hearths became smaller, Yule logs also decreased in size. By the late 19th century the traditional Yule log was downsized to a small table centerpiece decorated with greenery and candles. It was also about this time that French pastry chefs created la bûche de Noël (Yule Log) a log shaped, rolled cake, which was inspired by the original burning of the Yule Log celebration.

La bûche de Noël is more widely recognized, today, than the original Yule log or even the smaller centerpiece version. So as you go about participating in your family's holiday traditions, remember the evolution of the Yule Log; once a sacred part of Pagan/Christian winter celebrations, now more commonly known as an artistically decorated cake.

Warrior Persona Quiz Results:

30 - 25 points: You would do well as an early period warrior. Your pliable morals and desire for power lead you to be an aggressor rather than merely a defender of home and hearth. You attack your enemy with great physical strength and enthusiasm, but you lack training in swordplay and tactics. Regardless of whether it's with an enemy, your friends or your family, you enjoy a good fight.

25 - 15 points: You would do well as a middle or late period warrior. Noble of birth and of deed, you are a leader of men in battle. You have strength of character as well as of body. You train hard and are always ready to defend that which has been entrusted to your care, be it a gentle lady, a castle, or a kingdom. You are loyal and honorable, the perfect model of a chivalric knight.

15 - 10 points: You would do well as a mercenary warrior from any era of the period. You desire to improve your lot in life through acquiring as much wealth as possible. Your pliable morals allow you to sell your skills and strength to whoever has the most coin, so you find yourself in the role of aggressor as often as you are a defender.

Feast Word Search

by

Michelle Murnahan

M A T N U T S E C A T R B R E A D S
 K G R A I N S G U M U O T P L A T E
 N I E R W C C G R U R S S S G U M H
 I P N F H I A S D T N E P I E S C O
 F S C I E S B E S T I W I F A T U N
 E T H S Y U B S N O P A C H E E S E
 F O E H A M A E A N E T E W A F T Y
 P O R R I D G E E S E E S A L T A O
 A R L L A H E C B I B R D A E M R S
 S W E T S O O A E V E N I S O N D M
 T A R T S O E N I W E A S P U O S E
 I S N E E R G D F A F W B O W L S A
 E S F E A S T L I T P S G O B L E T
 S A E P E S A E G O O S E N O C S S
 Y B E R R I E S S R O A S T F O W L

Ale	Goblet	Porridge
Beans	Goose	Roast
Beef	Grains	Roots
Berries	Greens	Rose Water
Bowls	Hall	Salt
Breads	Ham	Scones
Cabbage	Honey	Soups
Candles	Knife	Spices
Capons	Meats	Spoon
Cheese	Mugs	Stew
Curds	Music	Swan
Custards	Mutton	Tarts
Eggs	Nuts	Trencher
Fat	Pasties	Turnip
Feast	Peas	Venison
Figs	Pies	Whey
Fish	Pig	Wine
Fowl	Plate	

Acknowledgements

Special thanks go out to Michelle Murnahan and Paula Ritter for submitting articles for this issue of Cat Tales and to H. Renee Dennis for proofreading the issue before publication.