

**1. Do you have any food allergies, and if so, what are they? (Kayleigh)**

**Eloise:** I have no allergies, but I do not drink alcohol. At all, in any form. No, not even cough syrup.

**Ryan:** Nuts make me sick.

**Gabriella:** No I really don't, for a period the doctor thought I was allergic to wheat but the test was negative.

**Dorigan:** No. There are foods and drinks I don't care for but I have no allergies.

**Karrah:** No particular allergies. I'm not fond of "tastes like burning".. or spicy food.. but I always find food I enjoy eating at feasts, so would be upset if menus changed to accomodate my tastes :(

**2. What is one of your favorite memories of someone or something from BBM, during your time in BBM? (Kayleigh)**

**Eloise:** Aww c'mon – it's been twenty-mumble years! "One?" There are so many snapshots that come to mind:

- Looking across the room at dance practice in Fennbrycg, and seeing my future husband for the first time. That's a good one.
- My first event at Rivendell in Bowman's Rest, and Randal holding court in the barn. He was sitting on a hay bale, but there was no doubt he was the king.
- My first Baronial Yule. The hall had\*gorgeous\* ambiance. The rings were given out in little cake and chocolate acorns – and I found one. It was magical, and it's the reason I was so insistent to revive that tradition. I still have the ring, by the way.
- Working my first Simplefare kitchen, back when it was at the Masonic Hall in Norwich. I stirred things all day, and washed dishes all evening. Then afterwards we danced until midnight. Clearly, my knees were younger then.
- The Ravenhill meeting at the Brass Jail in Danbury, where I mentioned that it had been announced in court the previous weekend that Drachenwald was going kingdom. Master Quintius, who was at that time Kingdom Exchequer did the happy dance (literally!) chanting "No more international calls, no more AT&T translators!"
- Mistress Daryl of Avalon handing me a green belt and saying "You want an actual belt, right?" That's how I found out I was apprenticed. Quintius had to show me how to tie it.
- The number of people from BBM who drove down to a Coronation in New Jersey for my laureling. It's hard to have something like that happen so far from home, but they came for me – and made it home.
- Every court document that I've made for every barony member over the years. They were all done for love – not one was just an assignment.

- The legitimate joy with which we were welcomed “back” into the barony when we hopped back across the border. What’s better than knowing that you’re valued?
- The first TWITOR, and the feeling of pride that I could do something for the barony in MY home. I cannot tell you how happy I was.

**Ryan:** I'd have to rank one from recent memory and one from antiquity (at least for me) as the best.

One of my first BBM Memories, and SCA memories come to think about it, was Kings and Queen's Archery championships at Harkness park/O'Neill center. It is one of my fondest memories of spending a day in the presence of near-absolute-strangers (at the time) and feeling at home. It was that point when I knew I was a SCA lifer. Also the Skunk visit would go on to shape all sorts of things. It's why my heraldry is what it is, and why there are skunks on my AoA and Court Barony scrolls.

My fondest recent memory was two 4Q's ago going up against Wyatt for the Archery Championship. I was tracking the whole day. I was ON. Nobody was beating me that day until the very end. I even put Godric on a run for his money. I don't think I've ever shot better in competition.

**Gabriella:** I think Acorn and Pearls II it was really hot and muggy but for me it was a really nice event. There were few people and everybody was sweating. Leandra was going around with her wheelchair and our daughter Michaela got a ride from her and thought that was the greatest thing in the world. What I loved about it was the feeling of being with family; everybody looked after everybody else and took care of each other.

**Karrah:** Someone- Back when rocks were soft and dirt was clean and I was six or seven, there was a Gentle. I could not even tell you his name.. because we children called him the Terminator. While the other adults were enjoying their event, he would keep us entertained by being the bad guy in all of our games. He was always It in tag, and we would tackle and attack him whenever we could at all times. He never got angry with us for being too rough or too loud, and I've always remember him as just being a really awesome guy who was a really good sport about being beat on by kids (and there were a LOT of us, back then. The "regular" group of kids numbered a dozen easily). I hazily remember what he looked like, even though I haven't seen him in nearly two decades. He left enough of an impression on me, though, that I think of him fondly all these years later.

Something- Our last Investiture. It was a pouring monsoon rain.. most people were in rain slickers and rubber boots, the camping area was drowned in a lake, and the walkways roared as rivers on the sides.

We still held a Bardic the first night, hidden in one of the buildings, and it was wonderful. All martial activities happened, sheltered on the stage or in various supply barns. The people of our Barony all worked their tails off to make what should have been a (pun intended) total washout, into an amazing and incredible experience.

What I remember most is how the Youth Combat was in the tractor barn, and all divisions were running tournaments. Space was tight, so our oldest fighters chose to fight in the rain. They ran out, did their bout, then ran back in to the shelter. All of the guys

who fought it still remember it with absolute GLEE to this day. Seeing them so excited about fighting was just... fantastic.

**Dorigan:** After over two decades there are so many, I'll just pick a few:

- Someone? That would be my wife. We met at a canton dance practice, I proposed years later at a Simplefare feast, and in between there were so many memories.
- Attending Coronation for the first time (in Fennbrycg). The grandeur and spectacle created a moment in which I could believe I was at a medieval court.
- When I received my Sagittarius at an event in Bowman's Rest and the companions came forward, the man I considered the best archer in the kingdom called out "Stand back - this one's mine."
- When I moved back from Ohio, the greeting I received when I came to a canton meeting made me sure I was home. When Eloise and I moved back across the border we got the same reception.
- Opening our house for workshops and practices, and seeing how happy and engaged people are as they learn and exchange ideas.

**3. What part of being Baron/ess do you expect to be, for you, the most distasteful part(s) of the job? What tactics have you thought of to deal with them? (Elizabeth)**

**Eloise:** I anticipate that the most annoying part of the job will be the inevitable times when a baronial commitment comes into conflict with something else that I would rather be doing that hour/day/weekend. That's going to irk me – because that is when it's going to feel like a job, rather than a hobby. But honestly, at that point the answer to myself is going to have to be "you can't always get what you want." The trick is to be gracious. When we decided to run, one of the things that I had to take a long hard look at was how much I was likely to resent those "interferences" with my life, and my tactic is twofold: first, accept that sometimes, it's just going to be like that. Second, if it is something that is just TOO good/important to miss – well, I do have a husband. Except in the case of dire family emergency we would never completely blow off a baronial function, but there is an advantage to a couple – in a pinch we can divide and conquer. That is not intended to be our modus operandi, but it is a nice solution to ameliorate the inevitable conflicts.

**Ryan:** I believe being in fealty to a King whose principles are diametrically opposed to my principles and those of the Barony. On one hand, it's the game we play. Fealty as a landed Baron is required. I have already given my fealty to this Kingdom as a Peer, and everyone knows how seriously I take that Oath. I have given my personal fealty to almost every king since I was made a peer. However, there can be a lot of ideas pushed with "good intentions" which are directly in opposition to the good of the Barony. Having to walk that fine line between my responsibility to the King and to the Barony I can see as becoming very distasteful. As evidenced by the steps taken by house Runnymede at Pennsic XL this line is difficult to walk. I would have to rely on House Runnymede for support and guidance in those extreme situations.

**Gabriella:** I don't see how anything can be distasteful unless I had to deal with somebody that is extremely rude to another person. I think when dealing with a large group of people you have to have a lot of patient and understanding as at time some personalities might crash. This is when some diplomatic skills come very handy, most of the time a person just wants to be heard and if you truly listen you can make him/her feel validate and solve the problem.

**Karrah:** Getting dropped into the middle of a ton of politics. Politics, especially in a fun, volunteer organisation, can be mind-numbing. I'm also aware it comes with the territory. All I can promise is I will always try to keep everyone's best interests at heart, try to get all the information, and internalize when I feel like people need to be struck with a clue-by-four. Playing nice even when politics are insane is always a win

**Dorigan:** While I agree with my wife that dealing with conflicts will be distasteful, I think that for me the most distasteful part of the position of Baron would be saying "no" to people's ideas. I can remember this happening when site restrictions precluded archery activities. In my mundane life I have dealt with this problem for twenty years as budget and time constraints have conflicted with the incorporation of new ideas. My solution has been and would be to work to find alternate solutions rather than leave the answer as a flat "no."

#### 4. **What do you feel the Barony does well? (Elizabeth)**

**Eloise:** We have kick-butt artisans in this group, separately and collectively. When I was making up a list of possible workshop topics and potential instructors, it was breathtaking how much skill we have in this barony, and every one of those people is excited about sharing their skill and knowledge.

Another thing that we do well is pull together to get things done. As much as I could wish for better organization, when push comes to shove, people do what it takes to get the job done.

**Ryan:** We do what we do. BBM produces some of the finest Archers, Artisans, Fighters, Soldiers, Cooks, Tailors, and "Servicepeople" (for lack of a better term) in the Kingdom.

**Gabriella:** I think one of our strong points is that we have a great number of talented people that are willing to share their knowledge and teach what they know with enthusiasm.

**Karrah:** The list of what we don't do well is easier than the list of what we do well. The most notable of "do well", however, is service. We have always fully embraced that this organisation runs on the shoulders of volunteers. As those before me have said best... we give the gift that cannot be returned... our time.

**Dorigan:** I feel the Barony excels at the arts and sciences; we have many artisans who not only produce fine works but teach their craft at only the slightest suggestion.

I think our Barony excels when it comes together to work as a group when asked, both on longer term events such as Daily life Schola, or in response to short notice requests such as a Coronation a number of years ago.

Our barony has martial participants of good quality who contribute at the kingdom level.

**5. What do you feel the Barony needs to improve upon, and as Baron/ess, what steps would you take toward that improvement? (Elizabeth)**

**Eloise:** The wonderful things that we do aside, the level of apathy in the barony is alarming. This is not unique to us – I’ve talked to many people in many groups, and the story is much the same. We have dedicated, hard-working people, and yet it seems like it’s always the same dozen doing the work. We have certain events that happen like clockwork, yet mostly no one will volunteer and move the ball forward until we’re on the brink of disaster. We also have people saying “we should do new things,” and yet seldom does anyone actually bring forward a proposal.

I don’t know what the solution to this problem is – if I did I would have taken action long ago. The best I could do in my own person was to volunteer to steward Yule a year out, even though stewarding is\*not\* a skill set of mine. I ended up having my own set of issues, but at least we weren’t scrambling for a steward in August – I believe in leading by example, even if I’m not the most competent example. The things that I can see doing are to try to encourage people to plan ahead for those things we know about, and to find out why people aren’t running new things. Sometimes people don’t step forward because they don’t know the process – that can be fixed. Sometimes they want the result, but want someone else to do it for them. That’s a deeper issue that is beyond the scope of this question. Sometimes they don’t feel like they can “intrude” into an event that seemingly runs under its own power – that can be fixed also. As baroness, I wouldn’t be able to change people’s behavior, but at least I would have a more visible platform to encourage them to look at things differently. Regardless of the election results, I’ll be doing that anyway. We’re currently doing better than we were. We need to continue that growth, and the best place to encourage it is from the top.

**Ryan:** I will touch upon this theme many times in responses in this message. Many in the Barony do not think of themselves as “BBM.” I always have, but I wasn’t entrenched in the Canton Culture before it started to break up. And recently it HAS begun to dissipate but there are still pockets. Many people still refer to themselves as from Bowman's Rest, Fennbrycg, Ravenhill, and Dragon's Aerie. If you look at the map of the barony on our own website it still lists Bowman's Rest and Fennbrycg. On the map on the Eastkingdom.org website it still lists the Separate cantons and until recently (when I dropped the info in the right hands) didn't list “Barony Beyond the Mountain” \*at all\*. This Canton Culture was all well and good when we had the base to support five separate groups. We have shrunk to the point where we had to dissolve two cantons to remain active as a Barony.

I’m not saying that we need to dissolve the other two... not at all... but there has to be a reengagement of the separate groups. The Core of the barony has remained focused

on the Central portion of the Arc of BBM. The meetings need to begin to rotate between the areas. The mountain cannot come to Mohammad, so Mohammad must go to the mountain. (LOL "The mountain" Unintentional Pun!) Karrah and I were talking about this the day before the Letters of Intent were due and it is something we both agree needs to be done. What I'd throw out there is a pendulum for the meetings. Go from the MDC one month, to someplace in Ravenhill the following month, back to MDC the next, then out to Dragon's Aerie the following month. Rinse Repeat. That puts three meetings in each of the cantons every year. Persons who cannot normally make meetings could make them. The days of the week could also be moved to accommodate people who cannot usually make Mondays.

**Gabriella:** We pride ourselves to be laid back but at times I think we are a little too laid back. To attract new people and keep them we should be offering a few more local opportunities to get dress and participate to an event. Mundane classes are great but are just one part of the picture. We have Simplefare and Yule and this past two springs we had Daily Life Schola, it would be nice to have another spring/summer event, it doesn't necessarily need to have a feast but maybe a running dayboard, I think this would give somebody, that might not feel comfortable yet to go somewhere where he/she doesn't know anybody, the opportunity to spend a day with people that they already know. I know it can be scary going to an event outside the Barony where you don't know anybody and if somebody doesn't feel comfortable at the beginning he/she might decide that they do not like it.

**Karrah:** Our biggest area in need of improvement is recruiting.

First off, I would challenge everyone to try to bring one new person to an event each year. A friend, relative, some random dude you meet on the street... whatever. Even if they don't come back, they may share their experience with someone else who decides to give it a try.

Secondly, my recurring theme... demos. Even if it's as simple as a booth at the local Ren faire or town carnival. Or a mini-event that we create just to draw in the public, such as [http://articles.courant.com/1995-09-12/news/9509120618\\_1\\_lords-medieval-ladies](http://articles.courant.com/1995-09-12/news/9509120618_1_lords-medieval-ladies) School demos are important, but they're more educational than recruiting... especially since the kids don't have drivers licenses. We need to get our foot in the door at the college campuses again, as well.

**Dorigan:** I think our Barony needs to improve participation levels by current and new members. Viewing our current membership numbers we should have no problem with either staff or attendance at events, but that number of registered members is not reflected in participation at local events. I know this has led to a concern here and in other groups of whether sufficient ballots will be cast to validate the polling. We are in need of new members - when I looked around at a local meeting and eighty percent of the people were peers, it seemed to me we are long on experience but short on future. I am unsure how to engage members who are participating on a limited level or who participate outside of the Barony. For myself I have attempted to increase participation by holding practices and workshops welcoming of newcomers as well as established membership.

## 6. What responsibilities do you feel the Baron/ess has to whom? (Elizabeth)

**Eloise:** The Baron/ess has responsibilities to a number of different groups. First and foremost is their human responsibility to their family. That needs to come first, as a number of family health crises have demonstrated to me over the last two years. If we're elected, people will need to understand that my responsibilities as daughter and mother come first. Wife... well, he'll be right there with me. The Baron/ess has a fealty responsibility to the royalty, to hold the lands in their name and to fulfill – to the best of their and their group's ability – any lawful requests from the crown. They have a responsibility to the people of their barony, which in my mind is the one with the most moving parts. That encompasses things including being involved as the visible head of the barony; encouraging the subjects of the barony to pursue their interests whether service, art, or martial; encouraging us to stretch to do things; being the voice of reason when something seems clearly beyond our capacity; and making sure that baronial subjects are recognized for their achievements at both the baronial and kingdom level. At the absolute minimum, they shouldn't be an embarrassment! I believe they have an obligation to lead – by example, from the top, and from the front.

**Ryan:**

- Family, Barony, Kingdom.
- First and foremost: Rule #1. Real Life Comes First.
- The Needs of the Barony come next. It's not the kings who put a Coronet on a Territorial Baron's head. It's the members of the barony. The first duty of a coronet is to see to the wellbeing of the Barony and support its members.
- Beyond the service to the Barony the job of territorial baron also requires service to the Kingdom. A Baron/ess must act as the King and Queen's eyes. They cannot see everything, they need the Barons to prompt the Royals on who is deserving of awards, etc.. The Baron/ess is also responsible for maintaining the Barony's health to keep the Society running. Without Local groups there are no events, without events, there is no Society.

**Gabriella:** I think as a representative of the Barony the first responsibility is to the people of the Barony. The role for me is more the one of ambassador for the Barony, as such they should act with courtesy and grace.

**Karrah:** Real Life first. If real life goes down the tubes, then SCA can't happen. We need to pay our bills, we need to be there for our families.

The Coronet has responsibilities to the Crown, but at the same time, has responsibilities to the Barony. Hopefully the two don't conflict.. but when they do, one can hope they do their best to do right by their Barony in the long run.

They have a HUGE responsibility to the Barony, of course. They need to be there for the group. They need to promote all of the positive things that we hope to see. They need to share member's triumphs and breakthroughs, and make sure to encourage those of the Barony.

I'll put it into simple context. Coronet SHOULD go to a Royal Progress event. However, if their Barony is hosting an event that same day, they should go to the

Baronial event instead. If their house burns down that day, they better be at home dealing with the house. Simple enough?

**Dorigan:** They are responsible to Family first, then Barony.

With a father nearing his ninetieth year, my wife's parents in retirement, a grown daughter starting her adult life, and a small daughter at home I am well aware life has priority over my hobby. I have found people are most understanding when life has required I postpone activities to address family issues.

A Baron and Baroness' duty is to the Barony which they hold in fealty to the crown. They are the public face of the Barony and in this capacity are the people the royalty and others will contact as "the Barony." They are the enablers who encourage the members to pursue activities and interests, and as part of this they give awards and act as "the ears and eyes of the Crown". The Baron and Baroness are responsible to the Kingdom through their oath to the Crown.

**7. How much do you think the Baron/ess should be involved in the running of the barony? Just the medieval bits or other stuff as well? (Elizabeth)**

**Eloise:** The governing documents and East Kingdom law are both fairly silent on this topic. The governing documents basically say that the responsibilities are ceremonial in nature, and are established by the laws and customs of the kingdom. Kingdom law mostly addresses installation and removal. That leaves a lot of leeway for local custom, and our local custom seems to change with the Baron/ess – which I think has worked nicely for us. In my opinion, the position overflows into both. As a practical matter, the Baron/ess are officers of the barony, and likely will periodically need to act as such. I think they obviously need to be heavily involved in the medieval bits, but I see overlap into the administrative side – for example, the royalty are likely to approach the Baron/ess in the event that they are looking for an event bid. So to that extent, they are involved. But in my mind, while the Baron/ess is involved, their role in those cases is to work\*with\* the seneschale, not instead of. I believe that the coronets and the seneschalate are a partnership, rather than either side being subordinate.

**Ryan:** I believe that Dinsdale and Shiro do it right. They never were iron fisted in the running of the barony and trusted their officers to serve well. I don't foresee being any more hands-on or -off then they are.

**Gabriella:** For me as I said before it is a position of ambassador. As I understand it the officers are in charge of running the administrative part of the Barony. The Baron/ess role is to unite the Barony, recognize the work done by the individuals in the Barony and reward it. If you compare the Barony to the human body the Baron/ess would be the heart, their role is to keep the barony united and happy.



**Karrah:** I believe the Coronet is there to be the face for the Barony first and foremost, then secondly are there to make sure people receive the recognition they deserve. There are officers who are very capable at their jobs who, in reality, run the Barony from the administrative end of things. The membership help run the Barony by making things happen.

**Dorigan:** As a practical matter the medieval and business parts of the SCA overlap and intertwine. I have lived in a Barony run by the Baron and did not enjoy it. I feel the Coronets should work as partners with the Baronial officers with neither side the lesser or greater.

**8. Do you think you will be able to be in tune with all the different aspects of the Barony? (Elizabeth)**

**Eloise:** I hope so – I intend to try. Obviously any candidate will be closer to some aspects than others. In my case, arts and service will always be closer to my core interests. The martial aspects baffle me a bit, but I would hope that the people whose interests align there would offer their input – although having a practice in my back yard has certainly helped give me a greater insight into some aspects of that area. I’ve lived in three of the four cantons over the years, so I also have some understanding of some of the differences between them – in character, geography, membership, and opportunities. I think understanding that the differences are there is certainly helpful, even though I’m not up to date on the ones I haven’t lived in for a while. I have to believe that eventually something will come up that I will have absolutely no understanding of, or inherent sympathy too – it’s just inevitable. When that happens, I hope that I will be able to reach out to someone who does possess that understanding to help me acquire it and respond appropriately.

**Ryan:** I am involved, in one way or another, in everything this barony has to offer. I am an Archer, a Soldier, a Servant, and an Artisan. I do not feel like I’m out of touch with any significant part of the barony as it stands.

**Gabriella:** Yes I think I am very friendly and get along with people very well. I learn quickly and I always keep an open mind.

**Karrah:** I would like to think so. Areas that I am not personally involved in, I at least have friends who are, to help me keep in touch with those activities. I’m easy to keep in contact with and supposedly very approachable, so no one should worry about not being able to approach me about things.

**Dorigan:** I would hope to. I am very involved in archery, I participate in a variety of the arts and sciences, and in younger days I was a heavy list fighter at Pennsic and in tournaments. While I live and have lived in what was the Canton of Bowmen’s Rest, I started my SCA life in Fennbrycg and was a regular attendee at Ravenhill meetings. I don’t believe this means I have all the knowledge I need to understand every situation,

but I feel I would be able to reach out to someone who could help me understand that situation.

**9. What do you see our relations with our neighbors (other Baronies and Shires) being? What areas of improvement and cooperation do you foresee with these groups? (Cormac)**

**Eloise:** Right now as far as I can see, most of our overt relationships with our bordering groups are pretty low key. Obviously we've gotten closer to Bergental over the last few years via the vehicle of our shared Yule event. As far as the rest – Dragonship, Bridge, Frosted Hills, Quintavia – there's not much in the way of official relations, although I would characterize them as "friendly." Perhaps there is something more structured occurring between the barons or the seneschals – I am not in a position to know. That said I know that many, many people in the barony (myself included) have dear friends in all of those groups. I think that's more important than "official" relations, because it is those friendships that spark cross-border co-operations. When people need help they turn to their friends – regardless of their group affiliations.

I think in the coming years we are going to have to see more of a regional approach to many things as the SCA continues to grapple with the recruiting and retention difficulties that every off-line organization is facing. In the current climate, we simply cannot continue to schedule events and such on top of each other and attempt to succeed. Much of that effort will need to come from the seneschalate, but it never hurts to have the barons talking to each other also.

From a practical standpoint, I'd love to see an occasional joint venture with Dragonship Haven. They're close enough, for goodness sake! Although unless someone comes up with a compelling argument, I'm personally not interested in resurrecting the Interbaronial Peace Feast. At the end it became the event that we had to do that no one was interested in - but something different could be a lot of fun. I'd like to see workshops advertised across the borders – and this one is one where I've fallen down. Dorigen occasionally advertises archery to Dragonship and Bergental, and I've thought of cross-posting the TWITORS, but I haven't wanted to clutter their list. Just assuming that everyone is a member of both e-lists shouldn't be enough.

This is an area where I can foresee some good coming out of the new rules regarding the baronial seats turning over more often – groups are less likely to get entrenched into a certain pattern of doing things, and could start to work together in different areas than they have historically.

**Ryan:** Bridge: Baron Eloi and I go way back. I even still have certain blackmail photos from the "kids table" at Simplefaire a few years back. :) I think we could have some more cooperation in the Rt 6 area in northeastern CT/Northwestern RI. There are some very good potential event sites up there which would be perfect for a joint event since it's easier for RI folks to get up there than it is for some of us in CT.

Quintavia: I have several fiends in the Quintavia area and as they begin their push to full barony status I think our cooperation can begin to really take off. Again, the I-395 corridor makes it easier for Quints to get to the northeastern corner of CT than it is for some of us.

Bergental: We have a good foundation with Bergental. I-91 allows the core of both baronies to easily mingle, as evidenced by the birth of Dual Yule. We do have to return to the original intent of Dual Yule though. It needs to begin to move back and forth. This is especially evident from last Dual Yule. With the “improvements” to the site the nice lawns where we used to picnic and hold the tournament are gone. This can be remedied by finding our own site with adequate fighting and picnic space.

Dragonship Haven: I “grew up” in DH. My first five years were in Dragonship and can tell you that there are some exceptional people in Dragonship. I can see a joint event with them at some point.

Frosted Hills: I have been to a few events in frosted Hills and know some of the folks out there. I don't know if we can arrange any joint events with them however. Their core is separated from Ravenhill by a large gap.

Northpass/Ostgardr: Again, this would require a lot of engagement of Ravenhill. Northpass has a solid core of members and has stood on its own for a very long time. I don't know how receptive they would be to a joint event or schola. Again they are separated from the core of Ravenhill and BBM by a good margin.

An Dubhaigeainn: Kayeligh and I are very good friends with most of the members of An Dubhaigeainn. Her father still lives on L.I. and we visit almost every month. Anything joint would require a LOT of work and a lot of boats...

**Gabriella:** I see us getting along with everybody and cooperating more with them especially with the way the economy is. I would like to see us have a few more joined event like the Yule celebration with Bergental. Personally I have friends in all of our neighboring territories, especially Dragonship Haven (they have helped me many times to staff events of which I was the autocrat) and the Crown Province of Ostgardr.

**Karrah:** In my opinion, officially we have really strong relationships with Bridge and Bergental. We have fine relationships with all of the other neighboring Baronies. With many groups having a change in Coronets in the coming year or two, I can only hope relations stay as strong, or improve.

With the way things are going, I hope we can improve things by doing more in the way of combined events (which shares viable sites, resources, and manpower), as well as working together to have less overlapping events too close to each other (ie.. try not to share an event day with the Barony next door!!).

**Dorigan:** As my wife has eloquently stated previously, the relationships with our bordering groups are pretty low key. Since we have shared our Yule event with Bergental over the last few years we've gotten closer. As far as the rest – Dragonship, Bridge, Frosted Hills, Quintavia – there's not much in the way of official relations, although I would characterize them as "friendly."

When I started in the SCA, there were numerically fewer groups; gamers had paper and pencil interaction (D&D, etc); and the SCA provided larger scale interactive recreation. Today there are more SCA groups which has increased the number and variety of events; there are now live action role playing events; gamers still play paper and pencil games; and in addition online gaming now consumes a significant amount of time from people who are our target group. To address this we must be thinking

regionally. First we need to be aware and plan our scheduling regionally so that events are not competing with each other. Secondly we need to be considering jointly sponsored events so that staff from multiple baronies can spread the work load over more people.

**10. What do you see as the future of BBM in relationship to our region and our Kingdom? How may this be improved for the betterment of the members and the Society? (Cormac)**

**Eloise:** As I mentioned above, I think that we're going to have to begin to take a regional approach. Events, practices, and workshops together with neighboring groups would likely benefit everyone. In a world where we are competing with the internet for people's time, while requiring that they actually leave their living rooms to participate, cooperation needs to become the new norm. The work of making that happen is going to fall squarely on the membership, but encouragement from the baron/esses can go a long way towards fostering the atmosphere to make that possible. Honestly, I don't have a vision for how our relationship with the Kingdom might change. It's a fairly simple creature at the moment, at least to my knowledge. Personally, I don't see any need to make it more complicated. :-)

**Ryan:** BBM is the core of the Central Region. Working with the regional seneschal and regional martial officers during my stretch as Central Region Archery Commander made this very evident. We need to keep that dedication to the Kingdom, the region, and the society going. Again, we need to engage the cantons, provide for more archery and fight practices, more workshops, and bring fencing back to BBM.

**Karrah:** I think as individuals, we contribute exceptionally well to the Kingdom and the Society, all in our own ways. We have artisans who make scrolls, garb, and gifts that are given to Royals and other Coronets. We have fighters who storm the fields for Crown and glory. We have members who volunteer in all levels of service to make our Society and Kingdom a better place. The only way to improve on that is to pull everyone else along for the ride (such as when there's a call to make Queen's favors, or to go as a group to shoot Archery War Points at Pennsic). The more we act as a group, the more we are noticed as a Barony as well as individuals.

**Dorigan:** As I stated above, I see more joint group and regional activities: workshops, practices, and events as the future of BBM and the SCA. I think that if we have more members active in the running of BBM and various activities in the area, we will have contributed to the betterment of the SCA as well as the barony.

**Gabriella:**

**11. Often when those who dwell outside of BBM ask some of our residents what their local group is they reply by the Canton and not BBM (long or short form). How can we develop a better identity as a Barony within our own borders? (Cormac)**

**Eloise:** To be perfectly honest, I just don't see that happening nearly as much as it used to. When I started, the cantons had much stronger identities than the barony. Of course when I started, the \*households\* had an even stronger identity than the cantons did! That time passed, and people turned to the cantons for activities and social identities. Perhaps I'm incorrect, but for a number of years now I have perceived that time also passing, and people are identifying more with the barony. Unfortunately, some of that is coming from a contraction of the membership and an inability to support so many different layers of bureaucracy. In a perfect world, we would be able to reverse that trend, but retain the baronial identity. I'd like to see that happen through the medium of shared experiences and responsibilities. Holding events under the baronial aegis is a good start. Doing things that involve baronial pomp – opening ceremonies at Pennsic for example – also contributes. But bluntly, to grow the groups and still maintain a baronial identity is a matter of indoctrination. People new to the group or to the SCA will identify in the way that we tell them to. If members of the barony value that identity, \*they\* need to rebrand us. The difference in rules from then to now is a huge encouragement to brand oneself as BBM – when I started, the rule was (or at least we perceived it to be) that in order to maintain status a group had to run at least one event a year. That encouraged the cantons to focus on cantonal identity for cantonal survival. That rule has either been rescinded, or the myth of it has died. Also, we've had a very visible and involved baron and baroness, which gives us a symbol to identify with. I tend to think that so long as we encourage BBM branded events and keep an active baron/ess, that the trend will continue.

**Ryan:** I touched on this a little earlier in this message. I will expand here since it has a different focus. I personally dislike that persons still self-identify as Bowman's rest or Fennbrycg. The attitude is quickly going away but it's still there. If any area needs to self-identify themselves as “BBM” it is those two regions. We folded those two regions into “just the barony” almost a year ago at this point. We needed to. The structure needed to be removed to allow those Fennbrycg and Bowman's Rest members to move up to Baronial Positions. Now, most of the former officers of those two cantons are Baronial officers. Once we begin to engage Ravenhill and Dragon's Aerie I think the cantonal identity may blend more with the baronial identity.

I have never identified myself as from Fennbrycg. I was never involved with Fennbrycg. In Dragonship I was always involved at the baronial level. Kayeligh was always involved at the baronial level in An Dubhaigeainn. It was surprising to me when I moved into BBM to be told that I was a member of Fennbrycg. In Dragonship I was a member of DH, I just happened to live in Dragon's Forge. It was strange to me when I moved into BBM that the paradigm was flipped. As I stated in my Letter of Intent, I have always been proud to be a member of BBM, even before I even lived in BBM when I was commuting to Norwich every day.

We need to provide for more BBM activities. Not events, per se, but like Opening ceremonies at Pennsic, Pennsic court, BBM encampments at larger events such as Northern and Southern region War camps, GNE, and the like, maybe someday a Baronial

Pennsic encampment. I have really enjoyed seeing the BBM procession getting larger and larger every year at pennsic. The first year I was Herald it was Shiro, Dinsdale and myself. This last year we had upwards of half a dozen besides their excellencies and I.

The one thing I would like to see more than anything else, and this was something that I was saving for the meeting, but want to get out into the open now, is a Combined BBM fighting unit. I realize the reality. We provide a large chunk of Northern Army. I know a number of our soldiers stand with VDK. I can count on one hand those who reside in BBM who stand with other baronies or as Independants. I am not asking for the entire war, but I would love to see ONE battle with all the soldiers of BBM fighting under Baronial Colors. A fighting unit, standing in Baronial Colors, is a massive statement to the known world. We are the Barony Beyond the Mountain. Fear our shields. Fear our swords. We are here.

**Gabriella:** I think the biggest problem we have is our geographical position. Personally I like the fact that the Baronial meeting is in Hartford, it is about an hour drive for me but in a way is central because is approximately the same distance from the farthest towns in the Barony. I like also that our seneschal tries to have the meeting moving to different places once in a while to give everybody a chance to participate to a meeting. I believe the Cantons in our Barony have a very large role in keeping activities accessible to everybody again because of our geography it is hard for some people to drive 2 hours to go to a workshop so having workshop organized by the different Cantons makes it easy to feel included. I believe a lot of it has to do with making people feel welcome and part of a bigger unit (the Barony).

**Karrah:** Really? REALLY? The only times I answer anything aside from BBM is if someone asks me what Canton I live in within the Barony. I don't honestly believe this is happening in such an amount as the question leads people to think.

Honestly, I don't think this is something I can answer. Instead, I would be inclined to contact those people who do NOT feel like they identify with us as a Barony and find out why. Is it something we can fix, or are we just doomed for the fact that our geography is a bit.. difficult? I find that we, as a group, are exceptionally welcoming and considerably less "clique-y" than it was when I was a child, or how I see in some other baronies. As the saying goes.. you can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make it drink.

**Dorigan:** I'm not sure I see this happening recently. I too remember when people identified themselves by Cantonal and Household Identities. By providing a strong Baronial identify in the form of activities and a crown presence I believe people are now more often identifying themselves with the Barony rather than its component groups.

**12. Where do you see the Barony in five years? How can we achieve that goal (Cormac)**

**Eloise:** Five years... we'll be gearing up to do this again. Hopefully, we'll have a new roster of officers. A lot of projections for where we might be are dependent on membership, and without a crystal ball, there's just no way to know. We've gotten a good start to becoming accustomed to fairly regular practices and workshops – hopefully in five years we'll be working with our neighboring groups for some of those things. To get there? We all need to work at it. People need to step up and take responsibility – as an officer, as an event steward, as a cook. This game doesn't work if the people don't. This means that we need to encourage people to take positions of responsibility, and we need to make sure that they can quit when their term is up. Right now we seem to be swapping hats, but if we could get a few people to give it a try, I think we might be able to get to a better place. But while the baron/ess can potentially have a vision for where the barony might be in five years, and may even have a proposed road map to get there, in the end it's up to the membership if they value the organization enough to put their time in to make it happen.

**Ryan:** I see us in five years pretty much where we are now, but stronger. We are now, and will continue to be, the heart of the Region, providing art, service, swords, and bows to the Kingdom. I see us larger and stronger, but with the same warmth and welcoming attitude BBM has always been known for.

**Gabriella:** I would love to have more people be more active in the Barony. If you look at the amount of paying members in BBM we have 164 (Jan 2011 census) with Carolingia being the only Barony in the Central Region that has more than us and Dragonship Haven has only 99. My question is where are all these people? I would like them to be more involved in the Baronial life maybe trying to send a questionnaire to ask if there is anything that would make them feel to start participating more to the Baronial life. Another thing that has been discussed often lately (even at kingdom level) is how to retain the new members. We are welcoming the first time that we meet a new person interested in the SCA but I don't think that is enough. The other day while talking to Linda Benedict we were discussing the idea of a “mentor program” for newcomer. Have one or two people assigned to the new person that would help him/her getting to know people, be available for making garb with them, not the occasional workshop but befriend them and make them feel like they belong.

**Karrah:** Aside from, as Eloise said, getting ready to do this polling bit again... one can only hope that we will still be vibrant, and stronger as a group. I can't promise that. Membership versus active membership is off everywhere. The SCA as a whole is seeing less in the way of newcomers, though plenty of seasoned folks are standing strong and working hard as they always have. I hope that we can pull in more new and active members. I hope we can re-interest the people who are here that seem to be hiding off in the shadows. If we manage those two things, then yes.. we will be stronger in five years. To manage those things, we need to start looking at doing more in the way of demos in a greater variety of places. We need to try to contact those people we claim as our members

that we don't actually know, and see what needs to happen to get them to come play with us again.

**Dorigan:** I think we should look back at the past few years, observe what has worked, continue with those things that have worked, and learn from what didn't. We have seen new people become involved, and we have increased activities: workshops, practices, and events. The Baron and Baroness have encouraged the people who lead these activities and were leaders at some themselves. We the members have made this happen and we can continue to make this happen. The best roadmap will go nowhere without people stepping up and working.

**13. Will you hold more or fewer courts and why? More or less formality, pomp, and ceremony and why? (Ernst)**

**Eloise:** Unless something dramatic changes in the barony vis a vis number of events held, I have to think it's going to stay about the same. We hold three baronial events a year, plus Unnatural Axes in Ravenhill and 4Q in Dragon's Aerie. I don't mention Daily Life, because that appears to be hiatus for the foreseeable future. Given that Baronial Birthday is often combined with another event, that is a grand total of four or five possible courts a year. Given the amount of business the barony seems to generate, that seems to be about right.

Personally, I'd like a little more formality, pomp and ceremony. Let's face it – as a scribe, I've always been a bit of a court junkie. I'd like just a bit more. Not too much though – we're mostly an informal bunch and court is for everyone, not just the baron/ess. But I would like to put on a bit of a show. After all, if we're not going to put on the show, why not just be a province?

**Ryan:** You're talking to a herald here. Formal Courts are Boring Courts. I have always attempted to follow in the steps of such heraldic acts as Cormac and Ernst. If court is as solemn as a funeral there's no fun and people leave to go to dinner. There's a line to walk there as well. Long courts filled with schtick have people tend to float off to dinner as well. I know that if the baronial court is going to have a lot of business or, especially, if we're going to have to share time with the Royal Presence that some of the baronial items of business can be done outside of court and have just as much meaning to the recipient.

But as the husband of a Scribe I understand that there is a time and a place for Ceremony. Scrolls going out are an important part of the society as it's not only the recipient being recognized, but also the skill of the artist. That beautiful work of art needs to be displayed before the populace because nobody's ever going to see that work of art ever again unless they visit the recipient.

I solemnly swear never to delay the simplefaire feast any longer than it takes to get all the food prepared.

**Gabriella:** I would definitely hold court anytime we have an event. I do like pomp and formalities during court it is period and it is fun, I also have a great sense of humor and appreciate any entertaining/fun situation. Yes we are in the SCA because we love history



and everything that has to do with it but we are in it also to have fun, laugh and forget about this crazy world for a while.

**Karrah:** Unless the number of events we have changes suddenly, there isn't much need for more or fewer courts.

I believe different parts of Court need different things. There are times for jokes, games, and being casual during Court. There are other times where formality and ceremony are better suited. No matter what, I am a FIRM believer in making sure that Courts are a pleasant experience for everyone, and not unnecessarily dragged out.

**Dorigan:** I expect to hold the same number as are currently held. There are currently four to five events held within the Barony and one jointly sponsored event just over the northern border. With our current level of activity this number of courts seems appropriate.

As a martial contestant at events for many years there has been, and still is, a certain thrill to be called forward and recognized in a formal court. So perhaps there will be a touch more formality as a matter of my personality and preferences.

- 14. We live in a large barony and not all parts are easy to get to. In many cases it's easier getting to Bergental or Dragonship Haven than it is to other parts of the Barony. How will you go about bringing the Barony together and making us feel more a part of the Barony? (Ernst)**

**Eloise:** As any realtor will tell you, "location, location, location." There's not a blessed thing to be done about the fact that somewhere, someone is going to be a two plus hour drive from the cool stuff. Been there, lived that. Likewise, there's nothing to be done about the folks who have to work weekends, or whose schedule is incompatible with practice evenings, or meeting nights. Sadly, you can't please all of the people all of the time. This is another question that overlaps many fields of responsibility. From a practical standpoint, access is more of an issue for the baronial officers as they are the people who actually have the final word on where and when meetings, practices, workshops, and events are held. From a responsibility standpoint, there's plenty to go around and the officers are not the sole arbiters of circumstance. What are the things that make people feel included? Want the barony meeting closer to home? Find a site and let Anarra know - we'll come. Want a practice? Do the legwork to see if you can put one together. Want an event? Dream up a scenario, find a site and put forth a proposal - we'll help! Want a workshop? Start one in your living room - that's what\*I\* did. There comes a point when the people in the outlying areas also need to reach out and involve themselves. The officers and the baron/ess will do what they can to enable your desires, but they are not the sole owners of your baronial experience.

That said there are certainly lots of things that the officers can do to accomplish "their half" of the reaching out. In the case of the baron/ess whose role is ceremonial rather than practical, I'm thinking of things like trying to attend meetings of the outlying subgroups, in the cases where meetings are actually occurring. Practices also. For Dorigan and I, where that occurs on a weekday we would probably need to split up - bedtime is supposed to be 7:30, I only really want to keep Charlotte up well past bedtime

once a month, and that will be for the barony meeting. If people put forth the effort to make a practice/meeting/workshop, I'll be there to do my best to help it succeed. Also, although I'm certain that our current illustrious leaders are well up on this point, it's definitely worth mentioning again that making sure the deserving people in those outlying areas are recognized in a timely fashion with appropriate awards is hugely important. It's always easy to keep track of the people right under your nose, but the baron/ess has a responsibility to keep track of everyone – wherever they're living.

At this point I'm going to put in a plug – if you know of someone you think deserves recognition, please let Their Excellencies know. The last few people I have written in for AoA's, I've also mentioned to them. It never hurts to have a little extra push.

To get back on topic, for some people, the practical matters of life are going to dictate that if they're going to play at all, they're going to play in Bergental, or Dragonship, or one of the other bordering groups. I ought to know – we lived three miles over the border in Middletown for ten years, and predominantly played in BBM for most of that time. BBM's activities were simply easier to access than getting to New Haven after work on a weeknight. Some people just want to play with their friends – who happen to be on the other side of the border. So while I would (and do) want to hear what those people who feel disenfranchised by either schedule or geography need from the rest of the barony, in the end, I would encourage anyone to participate cross-border rather than not participate at all. The Society will be richer with them than without.

**Ryan:** As I stated above. Moving the meetings around and having things to do as a barony outside the barony. Let's face it though. If someone's just over the border from an active group and wants to play with them I'd rather have them enrich the kingdom through another group than to not play at all. If they're at least playing there's a chance to engage them for our side of the border as well. If they're not playing, we've lost.

**Gabriella:** His is similar to a previous question and as I said before I believe that we have to get out of our comfort zone and meet the needs and desires of all the other 100 something paid members that we rarely or never see at a local event. Let's ask them what they would like to see and what makes them stay away and then change it.

**Karrah:** I don't see anything wrong with interacting with other Baronies.. especially with gas prices slowly rising. However, it IS important to make people feel like they actually belong in the Barony they live in. It's been suggested before (and I know Ryan and I discussed it already), that we all need to make an effort to try to move activities around (meetings, workshops, everything). Having everything in Hartford or Manchester, though in theory convenient, alienates those who lives on the edges of our lands.

**Dorigan:** There is no denying geography, and we will always have people closer to our neighbors than to other parts of the Barony. The best thing a baron/baroness can do is support activities that people want to be associated and identified with. I think our current Baron and Baroness have done an excellent job of this and I would hope I can continue their efforts by attending and supporting all activities in the Barony.

**15. Do you have any Pennsic plans for the Barony? (Ernst)**

**Eloise:** Nothing earth shattering. The big thing that I personally want is to put on a nice show for opening ceremonies. I've always kind of wanted to make a bigger splash. Not on the scale that say, Carolingia puts on, but I think our "whoever remembers to show up" plan has gotten a little\*too\* informal. A couple of people have asked me to do a TWITOR on banner making, and that would be a fantastic opportunity to make some pennants. Let me reassure you that they would NOT be on the scale of the baronial sail. ☺ It's also a dear wish of Dorigen's heart that some amount of the barony might go up to shoot the archery war point as a barony, with banner and herald. That would be spiffy.

**Ryan:** As I stated above I would like to see a fighting force emerge. I would like to see the Baronial Presence at Opening Ceremonies increase to match or exceed groups like Carillion and Bakhail. I would like to see a baronial encampment begin to evolve, though I admit that's a long shot in just 5 years.

**Gabriella:** This year will be the first time I go to Pennsic because of previous health reason and then career change I haven't been able to go before but I always wonder why there is not a BBM encampment in Pennsic like other baronies have? I would like to change that very much.

**Karrah:** Now HERE is a place where pomp and circumstance would be fun. How cool would it be to really go all-out for Opening Ceremonies?

Would also be kind of nifty is we could work out a Baronial dinner sort of thing, even if it were a potluck. We all rarely interact as a group at War. A dinner is simple and friendly, and lets us catch up without posing major schedule issues for people who are already pretty over-scheduled at War.

**Dorigan:** I would like to see a more organized group for opening ceremonies. Meeting at a camp away from Royal and processing down rather than trying to gather critical mass at the swirl outside royal encampment. I would like to see a Baronial presence at the populace archery shoot. I remember in years past BBM archers walked out to the archery range wearing tabards and favors, and the Baron in the lead. There was no question who we were, or how much we provided to the kingdom. I would like to see that again.

**16. Will you lead the Barony or follow the lead of others? (Ernst)**

**Eloise:** A little bit of both, I would think. Why would I run if I didn't want to lead? Like everyone, there are things I would love to encourage, in the barony and in the society, and from what better position could one lead by example? On the other hand, if I can't follow the lead of others, it means that my mind has closed to the opinions of others – and I'd hope that I've mostly outgrown those tendencies. Mostly.

**Ryan:** I would not have put my name into the running for the position if I didn't think I could successfully lead this group. I have plans which I will want to pursue during my tenure as Baron. I expect I won't be the only source of good ideas during that time,

however. Sometimes it is best to let another lead and support that person. It's part of the job to support the barony as a whole.

**Gabriella:** Certainly I would try to lead but following the wishes of the people not what I think is best for them After all I would be representing them.

**Karrah:** I believe the old cliché is good leadership is knowing when to lead, and when to let others lead. We have so many hard working, intelligent, fantastic people here, and I see no reason to let myself get in their way in the name of Leadership. When not leading, though, I will be there to encourage and support those who need it.

**Dorigan:** It will be some of both. If the Barony only went where Eloise and I had plans or interests a portion of the populace would feel disenfranchised. I've lived there, and won't create that here. When someone else has a different interest, I would try to encourage and support it.

**17. How will you include (or not include) the Children of the Barony; those visiting, new, and current participants, as part of the Barony? (William & Sara Grace)**

**Eloise:** This is an area where my opinion has changed over the years, for a number of obvious reasons. When I first started in the SCA at the age of eighteen, there just weren't many children around so they could be dealt with on a case by case basis, so to speak. As the membership aged, and more of us started families, children were (to me) a necessary inconvenience – something to be tolerated, accommodated to the best of our ability, but not much thought of. Then as there were more members with children, they became something to plan for and include. Then about three years ago it all got a little more... immediate. :-) Surprisingly to me, now that I \*have\* a small child, I'm not as behind "children's activities" as I was previously. Perhaps that opinion will change as she gets older yet, but right now I don't want her off doing separate children's activities – I want her doing things with me, as part of the main event. I'm realizing that setting up a separate children's track at an event serves to not only separate them from what everyone else is doing, but also pulls at least one of their parents out of the general activities. Personally, \*I\* don't want to spend my entire Saturday watching my child do something, I want to be doing things myself. Otherwise we may as well stay home. Charlotte has spent the last three Simplefares in the kitchen with me. Helping? Heck no – she's three. But she's learning to stay out from underfoot, and she's starting to want to help – which makes her part of the group rather than a tourist. When she gets older, I know that most everyone in the barony is willing to teach her anything she's interested in trying - and how fantastic is that for a parent?

I like the idea of a certain level of children's activities for the little ones both in general and at events, if there is someone available to run them, and there are people to take advantage of it. We just don't have a lot of young children active in the barony right now. The older kids who are active are coming out and playing with the rest of us – we've had a mess of kids at archery practice and at the workshops, and I like it that way. The best way to keep the entire family happy and involved is to involve the entire family.

**Gabriella:** There is a song that says “I believe the children are our future” this is true in life and it is also true in the SCA. I know many second and third generation Scadians and I think it is a wonderful place to raise your children. For this reason I am for having children activities or at least something for them to have fun with at every event. Off course we have to be conscious of the many rules and regulation regarding the children mostly for their protection.

**Karrah:** Keep on, keepin on. We have a strong history of making sure to encourage the Youth in our Barony. Youth combat with loaner gear available, as well as a Youth Champion (when applicable). We have a Youth archery champion. We always try to make sure to call the Youth into court to thank them for taking part in their activities.

I would like to see <http://www.reocities.com/rennata/ghunt.html> come back into use. It gives the youth who aren't involved in other activities something constructive to do aside from run around like maniacs for the entirety of the event. I used to have a blast at Dragon's Flight trying to complete the Hunt. It also gets Barony members to interact with them. It would also be nice to see, each event, one arts and crafts thing set up for the kids to do.. especially something we could use as gifts to Royals or somesuch. That would definitely make them feel included and important.

**Ryan:**

**Dorigan:**

**18. How active have you been in participating in East Kingdom Curias within the previous 2 years (do you attend these yourself, and if so, how often)? (Kayleigh)**

**Eloise:** I haven't attended a curia since I was a Great Officer of State, and required to. Nor have I had much desire to – laws and sausages... If something has been on the agenda – when there IS an agenda – that is of interest to me, I make sure that someone who is going and permitted to speak knows my concerns. While it is interesting to attend, the sites for curias have been generally problematic for us – Wes' Rib House in RI on a Sunday, the Sunday after Birka requiring the expenditure of an expensive hotel room... to be perfectly blunt, it hasn't been worth it to attend a forum where I am expected to be seen and not heard. :-)

**Ryan:** I have been present at every Curia for the last five years with the exception of the emergency curia at Pennsic XL. (I was closing the Archery Range after the Champions' shoot.)

**Gabriella:** I have never been to Curia but I regularly read the agenda when they post one and keep abreast of the new rules and regulations.

**Karrah:** I generally do not attend Curias. I have other responsibilities at events (especially Pennsic) that keep me from them. When a topic that I care about is being discussed, I tend to send my thoughts to whoever is playing emmisarry (sometimes this goes through my YC superiors, and sometimes through Baronial lines). I understand this would have to change if I were representing the Barony, and I have no problem with it.

**Dorigan:**

**19. Do you know what the recent changes and proposed changes to Kingdom Law are? What are your thoughts on these changes and the proposed ones? (Kayleigh)**

**Eloise:** Well, they've mucked with the polling procedures and terms for the baronial seats again – at this rate it could be a moving target for years. I don't know what the proposed changes are – the only thing on the seneschal's website is "new business." I sincerely hope that means there just isn't an agenda yet, rather than it becoming a trend to spring changes without notification and utilize curia as a press conference rather than... well, a curia.

I have mixed feelings about some of the recent changes. After some thought, I can get behind baronial term limits. I realize that every long-standing baron/ess in the decades that I've been involved has ended up eventually being bad for the group in one way or another. I very much like the moves to make polling procedures, ballots, voting age, etc. consistent throughout the kingdom. It reduces confusion, streamlines the process, and holds everyone to the same standards. The whole grant awarded upon "successful" completion I'm a bit more ambivalent about. However I've come to understand that it's reactive to some abuses, so I can see where it's coming from. I haven't paid a lot of attention to that one – Dorigan has a grant, I have a patent – it's not relevant to us personally.

I guess I'll find out what my opinions on the proposed changes are if they're posted on the seneschal's website. Hopefully in\*advance\* of curia.

**Ryan:** As I stated in my Letter of Intent, part of the reason I am running for Baron is that the more contentious rules coming online in the recent curias concerning Baronial regulations won't apply to me. I already hold a Court Barony and a Patent of Arms. The changing of the rule for the Grant of Arms from being bestowed at investiture to divestiture is a valid concern. It was also a valid concern about the Court Barony being automatic at divestiture. There are a few recent examples (within the last 4-5 years) of a baron getting elected, being invested, and then for all intents and purposes disappearing for 3 years. One such person, who I once considered a friend and who will remain nameless (but you can look it up,) when he decided to come back to the SCA after leaving for 3 years, was granted his Court Barony since he was a former Territorial Baron. He has since disappeared again but still holds a Grant and a Coronet.

As to the other, more contentious change... Term Limits are a Good Thing. Many people do not have the mind to step back from a job they've spent half a decade on. I look up to people like Ellesbeth (of bridge) and Ian and Katherine (of Ostgardr) for their service, but twenty years is just too much. At that point you're past continuity and into

stagnation. Ian and Katherine now admit they were in the jobs FAAAR too long and admit one of the reasons they kept going because they didn't see an out.

It takes a LOT of time, effort, blood, sweat, and tears to be a Baron or Baroness. It takes a Lot more effort to step back and hand that legacy to someone else. Whomever of the four of us inherits Shiro and Dinsdale's job has to respect that legacy. With Set term limits in place at the kingdom level this makes that transition easier.

HOW those changes were presented and imposed at the Curia at War of the Roses was probably not the best way to affect the change. Perhaps a simple bylaw which stated "All Baronies must include in their bylaws provisions for term limits not exceeding five years and the incumbent baron/ess may not succeed themselves" would have affected the change in a more... politically acceptable? way.

**Gabriella:** Yes I know what the agenda for the Birka meeting is and I like the fact that they are trying to streamline the election process it makes sense for it to be the same across the kingdom.

**Karrah:** Ohhh boy.

On term limits... I like the idea of term limits, but disagree on the current Coronets not being allowed to re-run. A provision requiring an election every five years, I can get behind. It gives people a chance to graciously step down, as well as provides others a chance to step up without stepping on toes. However... sometimes people just happen to like the person they chose, and said person isn't burnt out after five years. It's easy to try to compare it to, say, being Crown... but at the same time, any person only has to go a grand total of 6 months out of 18 NOT being a Crown of some sort.

I firmly believe we are all adults, and should have the choice as to whether we want to re-run for a position. Let the populace make the choice.

On the change in heavy combat age... I disagree with it. I believe the reasons behind it are well-intentioned, but flawed. All I can really do is wait and see how things turn out. If anyone wishes to speak further on this, please feel free to do so in person.

**Dorigan:**

**20. Which activities and interests (A&S and/or martial) have you held over the years - and which ones would you like to try in the future? (Kayleigh)**

**Eloise:** Oh my.

Let's see. I've done: calligraphy, illumination, embroidery, clothes making, lace making (tating and bobbin,) wood block printing, etching, knitting, cord making (mostly lucet,) pysanky, shoe making, glove making (dabbled,) a bit of basket making, tablet weaving, some wood working, rigid heddle weaving (the current obsession,) I've tried lampworking, stained glass (copper foil, not lead came,) and I have a working knowledge of brewing. I also build fires. I've tried archery, but I stunk at it. Oh – and child-rearing.

Things I'd like to try: more lampworking (need to make a spot in the basement,) more complicated woodworking, lots more basket making, mosaics, period quilting (mine is all modern,) archery again, if Dorigen can find a crossbow I can pull; enameling,

bookbinding, fancy weaving, leather tooling, stone carving, pottery making, and doll making. Metal work would be way cool. I'd love to build a beehive oven in the back. That's off the top of my head. What can I say – I have a short attention span.

**Ryan:** I Fight, I shoot, I marshal, I dabble in leatherwork, I have been known to put paint and pen to paper, I have authored scrolls, I have been known to sing (in the car, to Kayleigh's dismay), I am a Loud-o-crat extraordinaire.

**Gabriella:** Lets see: Archery, I had not have much luck with it because after getting my brand new longbow I had 2 car accidents and 2 surgeries. Embroidery, leather working, enameling, book binding (got everything but had not started yet) garb making, cooking, jewelry (mostly using pearls and semi-precious stones), chain mail, silk banners (I made mine and need to make my husband's) and banners.

**Karrah:**

- -Baronial Youth archery champion... awhile back. Look for "Annabelle" on the horn if you feel inclined to do the math for me.
- -Youth combat fighter from 12 to 18, where I then became a youth combat marshal, which I have continued to be to this day.
- -Heavy list authorized since I was 18.
- -On occasion, I enjoy thrown weapons (yay tossing axes!!)
- -Passionate about the bardic arts. I recently stepped down as Bridge Baronial Bardic Champion.

I've been trying to learn more about "crafty" things lately. I sew a lot of my own garb (the really simple stuff, I'm not ready for super fancy!). I'm trying to re-learn how to knit. It would be REALLY cool to make scrolls.

**Dorigan:**

**21. I would ask the candidates if they know why this not happened (heavy list fighting baronial group). I would ask about their plans regarding integrating the fighting community with the barony. (Arn)**

**Eloise:** Oof. As someone who is not and has never been part of the fighting community, I can only tell you what my perceptions have been over the years – which may or may not bear any resemblance to the actual reality of the matter.

The short answer to my perception of why we don't have a baronial fighting unit is that there's nothing in it for the fighters. To expand:

For as long as I've been active (1987) the heavy list practice has been out in the eastern part of the state – first in Fennbrycg at UConn, and later in Dragon's Aerie when we lost the ROTC space. For all of that time, I've always been under the impression that it has been a wholly owned subsidiary of the households, and part of BBM only nominally in so far as it is physically located in Connecticut. My understanding has always been that most recruiting done via heavy list in the barony is indoctrinated into



those households rather than the barony. It's just the way it is. The man-at-arms / squire / knight/master relationship is a close one that potentially offers a route to the chivalry, and perhaps to a spot in a royal household. The barony offers much less glamorous opportunities and rewards. "We" don't provide what "they" want.

How to integrate the fighting community with the barony? For me, the answer to that is "damned if I know." To be entirely blunt, if having a sitting baroness for six years who is a \*part\* of the fighting community doesn't do it, I'm stymied to think of what \*I\* could possibly do that could. I'm not willing to write it off as a lost cause, but it's hard to build ties between two groups of people who do nothing together. Speaking from my side of the divide, I'd like to see the fighters more often. Come to a barony event even if it doesn't have fighting. At the events that do have fighting – put on some garb and stay for dinner. Heck – even just come inside for a few minutes. For my part, I'd like very much to know what the other half of the equation wants, because I don't have the context to intuit it.

Honestly, given that we've brought it up – it would be a great conversation to have here on the list, independent of the election conversation. I'd be very interested to hear in concrete, practical terms from that community what keeps them from playing more with the barony, what would motivate them to do so, and if they even want to. Can't hurt to ask, right?

**Ryan:** I admit... While I was trained by the likes of Balfar, Ivar and Torrin, in DH, it was Kayleigh's barony who welcomed me into a unit first. It felt more comfortable at the time following a Baronial unit instead of a Ducal unit.

I floundered a bit when the An Dubh unit fell into inactivity. By that time I had moved into BBM and I was disappointed that there was not a baronial fighting unit to immediately hook up with. I looked into joining the local unit of Northern Army but with my inability to make the practice I did not feel right jumping into the northern army shield wall.

To be perfectly honest I do not know why there isn't a BBM baronial fighting unit. I know that there are powerful armies which claim most of our fighters. If elected I would have to seriously consider the history and the culture of our fighters. A baronial fighting unit is a massive drive for both recruitment and retention of new members. Baronies with strong baronial fighting units, An Dubh, Bergental/Confordia, and Ostgardr tend to attract and retain members more easily. It gives new comers a sense of belonging to something right off the bat instead of having to look for an identity entirely on their own. Those first impressions color new members views for their entire career in the SCA.

**Gabriella:** This is a tricky one for me, I do not know much about fighting although I do enjoy going to Crown Tourney and watch the competition. From the many discussions I heard the two biggest problems I see is lack of facilities that can be used to do fighter practice throughout the year and again geography. Being relatively new to the Barony and the society in general (6 years in BBM and 1 in DSH) I do not know what happened before me or what kind of political/personal problems there might have been.

**Karrah:** I have a pretty fair idea of why we do not have a Baronial fighting unit.. and also why I think it would not be in anyone's best interest to have one (sorry Ryan!!)

The majority of our baronial fighters play with the Freehold of Riverkeep/House Silver Dragon (including myself). A few play with other fighting units.

However.. let's look at our fighters, and see who they are squire or man at arms to...

Master Pat

Master Feral

Master Llewelyn

and I believe Master Frodo also has taken on a person or two.

I am not certain who Frodo fights with at Pennsic, since he hasn't been able to make it recently (though I do remember a few years of having him pushing me forward in the Riverkeep lines).. but the former three are all in the same fighting household....

Riverkeep. Squires and Men at Arms follow those they've sworn to into combat. Fighters who hope to someday wear the white belt or baldric, that aren't CURRENTLY anyone's squire or man at arms, will try to follow those who they admire and wish to learn from.

Though I have no such aspirations, I consider the guys in Riverkeep to be my brothers and sisters. They've been there for me through thick and thin, and I would be hard pressed to leave them to try to start any sort of Baronial fighting unit. It isn't that I don't like the people in the Barony (duh)... it's that these are the folks I fight with, and they follow Master Feral, Master Pat, and Master Llewelyn onto the field.

As an addendum- MOST Baronies do not have Baronial fighting units. I would not consider us lacking because we don't, either.

**Dorigan:**

22. **“Karrah, if you have to work most weekends, how do you plan to fulfill duties as a Baroness?”**

**Karrah:** This is a bit difficult to explain, so please bear with me. The TL;DR answer doesn't suffice.

For those who don't know, I work as a dealer at Foxwoods. I work nights. I work weekends. I work holidays.

HOWEVER.. I have the ability to mess with that, here and there.

Vacation time. I get three weeks vacation time every year. As some folks know, I use that for Pennsic. I arrive at Pennsic on Day 0, and don't leave until the final Saturday or Sunday, depending on my mood or the weather. I have not missed a Pennsic since 1997, and have not missed two weeks of Pennsic since 2002. It is A Big Deal.

Aside from that, I have the ability to try to request one Saturday off each month. As long as it isn't a major holiday, I've been very successful over a number of years with this practice. It's how I attend events like Birka, or Simplefare. The only problem with this system is that I need to pick one event per month to prioritize. I generally do this first based on need (do they NEED a youth marshal? does someone have something important going on that I should be there for?), followed by a mix of desire or travel (I enjoy this event a lot... it is relatively nearby). It mostly has to do with where I make a commitment. If I were Baroness, my commitment goes first to Baronial events, then

working around from there to other events I need to be at. This system doesn't seem to be an issue, since we don't hold tons of events every month that I'd need to dodge around.

As a last resort, I can always either call out (I work up one sick day to use as I please every two months, and have seven "points" per year I can use if I'm out of sick time) or attempt to give the day to another employee (not always successful in the summer months, but generally easy in the winter months). Neither options are exceptionally thrilling to me, because it's a sizeable hit to my paycheck, but goodness knows I've called out of work for Simplefare before.

Absolute worst case scenario, I go to the event during the day, and leave in time to attend work. It requires Court to be held closer to 4 or 5, but is do-able (no different than when the reigning Crown has to attend more than one event in a single day.. poor guys). I've done that in the past for Simplefare, Yule, and various Bridge events.

I did not walk into this without considering all of this ahead of time. If I'm elected, I am willing to make accommodations where they need to be made, as I always have when asked.

If anyone needs further explanation on this, I am always free via e-mail.