



# **The Barony of Namron's Virtual Beltane**

**May 2, 2020**

## **Post-Event Review**

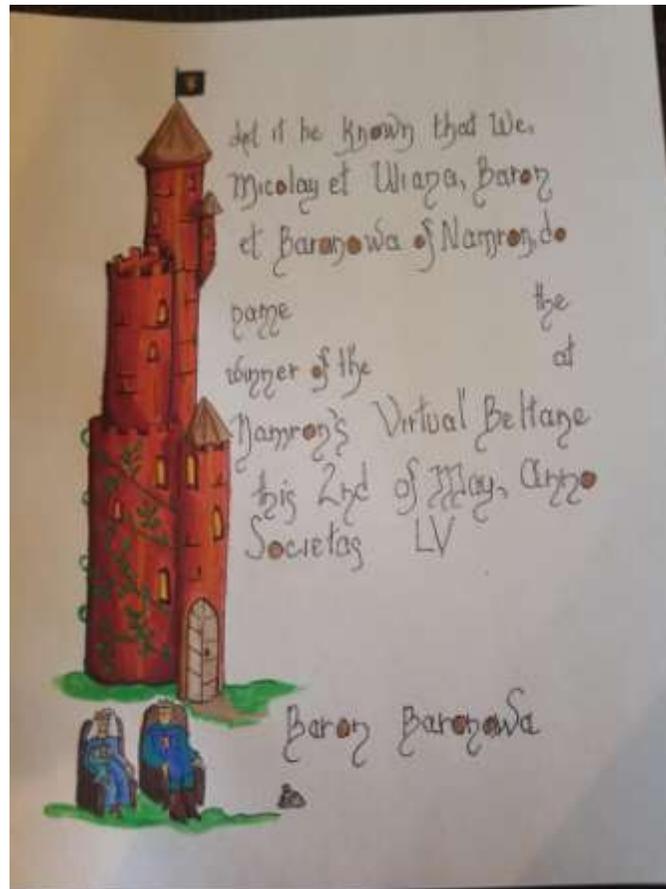
Event Steward: Bantiarna Cailleach Dhé inghean Uí Chaerbhail

Prepared by:  
Frú Kolfinna Egilsdóttir, Seneschal  
Barony of Namron

## Introduction

Bantiarna Cailleach Dhé inghean Uí Chaerbhail was our Event Steward for Beltane this year and had planned an amazing event. The theme was an adaptation of the Roman celebration of Floralia. She agreed to steward the virtual event, and worked to incorporate the original theme as much as possible.

All Championships have been postponed until Protectorate in October, but we added competitions for Virtual Beltane. An original scroll was designed by Baroness Ayesha du Warwick specifically for this event, and copies were painted by members of the Firestorm Ink Guild.



A fun tourney was originally planned for Beltane, and we wanted to somehow incorporate this into our virtual event. Baron Donnchadh Beag mac Griogair, Deputy Seneschal-Ad hoc, and Lord Mani (Yancy) Alfsson, Webminister, adapted Dungeons & Dragons rules, and utilized both the Roll20 online gaming platform and a WebX chat for implementation.

In order to maintain the “feel” of an SCA event, we strove to use standard event terminology as much as possible, such as, “Morning Court,” “Armor Inspection,” and “Taverns.” A downloadable site token (origami jumping frog with Virtual Beltane branding), created by Their Excellencies, was available at “Gate.”

## Schedule of Events

8:45 am (or at Their Excellencies' Pleasure)- BARONIAL MORNING COURT

9:00 am - Iron Artisan Begins

Class- "Tenntrod Construction for Beginners" with Fru Kjalvor Saebjornardottir

9:30 am - Beltane Brawl Armor Inspection

Class- "How to Build an Affordable Spear for Thrown Weapons" with Lord Ryan Savage (pre-recorded)

10:00 am - Beltane Brawl Start

Live- Minister Of Children Activity pt. 1

Class- "Safety Dance: European Court & Folk Dances for As Many as Will or as few As You Have" with HL Cornelius Meriläinen & Lady Kersten Meriläinen (Zoom)

Class- "How I Make Leather Mugs" with Thane Andrew Turnbull (pre-recorded with Q&A available)

11:00 am

Live- Minister Of Children Activity pt. 2

Class- "The Exquisite Cadavre" with Elspeth of Wyldewoode (Zoom)

Class- "Your Persona: Figuring Out Who You Are... in the SCA" with Maestro Orlando Giovanni (Zoom)

12:00 pm

Class- "Poisons & Antidotes" with Lady Jehanne de Montauban (Zoom)

1:00 pm

Live- Minister Of Children Activity pt. 3

Class- "Food Safety101" with Baronessa Caterina Giovanni (Zoom)

1:30 pm

Class- "Advanced Block Printing: Printing Yards of Fabric Evenly" with Master Cassius Lepus (Zoom)

2:00 pm

Live- Minister Of Children Activity pt. 4

Class- "All About Largesse" with HL Etienett de Bitche (Zoom)

3:00 pm - ROYAL COURT (or at Their Majesties' Pleasure)

4:00 pm (or immediately following court)

Live- Minister of Children Activity pt. 5

4:30 pm - Bardic Circle via ZOOM

5:00 pm

- Iron Artisan Deadline

- Spang Decorating Contest Deadline

- Flower Decorating Contest Deadline

6:00 pm - BARONIAL EVENING COURT (or at Their Excellencies' Pleasure)

## Courts

Their Excellencies Micolay and Uliana Haiduk held a Morning Court, welcoming everyone, and reviewing the planned activities for the day. This was streamed to Facebook Live from Zoom. Her Ladyship Villana Palazolo, Herald, opened and recessed court.

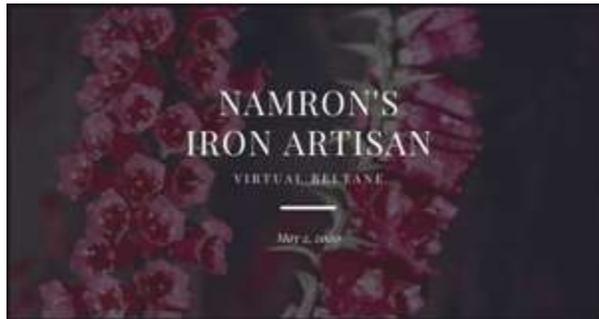
Throughout the day, Their Excellencies surprised members of the Populace with “Pop-Up Courts,” observing social distancing protocols, to deliver previously-read awards. These courts were conducted using Facebook Live, and were rated as the favorite activity of the day by a huge percentage of participants.



Her Royal Highness Margherita de Mantua joined us for Evening Court, and shared words of gratitude and encouragement. Their Excellencies had prepared slides to share in addition to announcing the competition winners, and also displayed all of the prizes and scrolls.

**We highly recommend holding court, even if official, lasting business is not conducted. The Populace enjoyed seeing our Baron and Baronowa, and were active participants in the live feed comments.**

## Competitions



Our flagship competition for this event was our Iron Artisan. A theme of “flowers,” and rules were announced immediately following Morning Court. Participants were asked to create something, in any medium (including Performance Arts), using materials on-hand. The scheduled time was from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm. Because Facebook time stamps are not specific during certain ranges, it was necessary to promptly check for all submission received by the closing time.



Beltane Brawl, our virtual tournament, was well-received, and although Beltane traditionally isn't a combat event, we wanted to include this activity to offer opportunities of interest to wider audience. The tournament was partially streamed to Facebook Live by Boiarynia Koia Karasova. Because there was no way to directly stream, she recorded her desktop screen with her phone. Not ideal, but you work with what you have.



### Prizes!

Prize baskets were provided for competition winners. Notebooks with custom-printed covers and a choice of either a Namron or Ansteorra banner, both made by Their Excellencies, were included for all winners. Adult winners also received a \$25 gift certificate to a local SCA potter. Our budget included shipping for out-of-area winners. Big surprise: One of our winners was from Germany, which significantly impacted the shipping cost!

## Classes

THE BARONY OF NAMRON PRESENTS  
*Virtual Beltane Class Descriptions*  
MAY 02, 2020

**TENNTRAD CONSTRUCTION FOR BEGINNERS** *Fru Kjalvor Saebjornardottir*  
In this class you will see the tools and supplies needed to begin making your own tenntrod for Norse posaments creation. We will also go over basic technique, basic troubleshooting and where to buy your own supplies.

**HOW TO BUILD AN AFFORDABLE SPEAR FOR THROWN WEAPONS.** *Lord Ryan Savage*  
Description- Spears are generally the last part of a throwers arsenal, this will be a video on building what is called a Spartan practice spear. These are used in the Spartan race and make for a good beginner at a low cost, and minimal materials.

**SAFETY DANCE: EUROPEAN COURT AND FOLK DANCES FOR AS MANY AS WILL, OR AS FEW AS YOU HAVE** *HL Cornelius Meriläinen and Lady Kersten Meriläinen*  
Dances may include: Rond d'Argenton, Petit Rose, Dumul Draculi, Quen Quer Que, and whatever else we're in the mood for.

**\*HOW I MAKE LEATHER MUGS\*** *Thane Andrew*  
Learn how to make your own Leather Mug! We will walk through each of the steps necessary to complete a leather mug using examples from each of the major steps. Electronic documents of the process and materials wvill be available at the time of the class for those who participate.

**THE EXQUISITE CADAVRE** *Elsbeth of Wyldewode*  
A post-period artistic technique in which artists collaborate to build a unique piece of art. This was originally founded from an old parlor game. While it is not period, the concept can be traced back to the ancient bardic circles in which storytellers would build on the ones that came before. For this class, participation is generally required, though if one wanted to sit in with a partner, they could. There will be an explanation of general rules at the beginning, but should be somewhat as follows: Each person will receive the starting stanza of a poem and will have the class hour to write their own personal stanza. As this is for Beltane, those participating will be encouraged to write a personal memory of previous Beltanes. The poetry style free, but will be limited to five lines.  
  
As soon as the poetry lines are completed, the artists will turn in the poem and the teacher will correlate these lines together and clear the final poem. This will be presented to their Excellencies as a gift from the poets of Namron to the Barony. All the collaborators will be named.

**YOUR PERSONA: FIGURING OUT WHO YOU ARE...IN THE SCA** *Maestro Orlando*  
I'll discuss the various methods that people try when deciding on a persona in the SCA. I'll weigh the pros and cons of each method, what resources are available and give some examples of persona success and failure. No materials required but feel free to bring 2 or 3 persona ideas you've had and we can discuss them with the group.

**POISONS AND ANTIDOTES** *Lady Jehanne de Montauban*  
This is an overview of the most common poisons in the Medieval time period, and several of the medieval antidotes that have been documented. This class is offered by the Ansteorra Herbalism & Apothecary Guild as a required part of the "Certificate of Apothecary Basics". Class researched and information compiled by Master Seamus O'Caellaigh, author of Pustules, Pestilence and Pain: Tudor Treatments and Ailments of Henry VIII.

**FOOD SAFETY 101.** *Baronessa Caterina*  
The class is based off of classes that food handlers take to get a food safety handlers license. It is everything a feastacrat, lumcheonacrat, or tavernacrat needs to know to prepare food safely.

**ADVANCED BLOCK PRINTING: PRINTING YARDS OF FABRIC EVENLY** *Master Cassius*  
We will deal with different ways to layout patterns and how to layout patterns so you can print your own fabric to make clothes with.

**ALL ABOUT LARGESS.** *Honorable Lady Etienett*  
What is largess and why do we give it out? Who can give Largess? These questions will be answered in this class.

Our Class Coordinator, Sigridr Vilhjalmsdottir, recruited instructors for ten diverse classes. These were a popular addition to the day. Sigridr spent time with an instructor who had never used Zoom, to help learn the controls, and conducted a trial run to ensure things would go smoothly.

## Minister of Children

Our Minister of Children, Lady Dýrfinna Mikaelsdóttir, conducted five presentations by video throughout the day. In keeping with the Roman theme of the original event, she had prepared several activities, and converted some for the virtual event.



The first activity of the day was making a mini maypole. Dýrfinna demonstrated the entire process by video.



For activities 2-4, she read a book titled, "You Wouldn't Want to Live in Pompeii," that discussed the eruption of Mount Vesuvius.



The final activity of the day was a volcano!

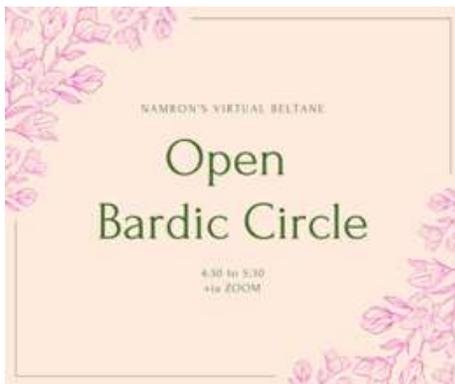
## Activities



Per His Excellency's request, we had planned a "Favorite Cookie Competition" for Beltane. Once we switched to a virtual event, he implemented a Cookie Swap instead. We had numerous participants who either personally delivered or mailed cookies to their recipients. Several participants shared photos of the treats they received.



The Privateers of the Dark Horse frequently host evening adult-beverage taverns at events. For Virtual Beltane, they hosted a Virtual Fireside Tavern instead, using Zoom, complete with a fire pit onscreen. This was held on Friday evening, as people had begun "trolling in" already and wanted to socialize after "setting up camp."



An Open Bardic Circle followed Kingdom Court. It ended up primarily as a chat, but those were all popular throughout the event.



We hosted one final chat in Zoom, following Evening Court, with a strong turnout. It was a relaxing way to chat with friends as the event wrapped up, and was well-attended.

## Engagement

### Custom Profile Picture Frame



Bantiarna Cailleach created all of the custom graphics for our event, including a profile picture frame for participants to use on Facebook. Releases are on file with the Chronicler (who happens to be Cailleach).

### “His Excellency Says”

Pre-scheduled posts spread out throughout the day. The first two were the Top Posts, with the most engagement, for the whole event.



# Scavenger Hunt

Pre-scheduled posts spread out throughout the day.



## Analytics

### Facebook Group Results:

A seven-day spread is the tightest view available for Facebook Groups. Our group had 321 active members during the week of the event (April 28-May4), and 332 active members between April 7 and May 4. For lack of a better statistic, we used the 321 figure as attendance on our Event Report.



Posts, comments, and reactions for the 7-day period:

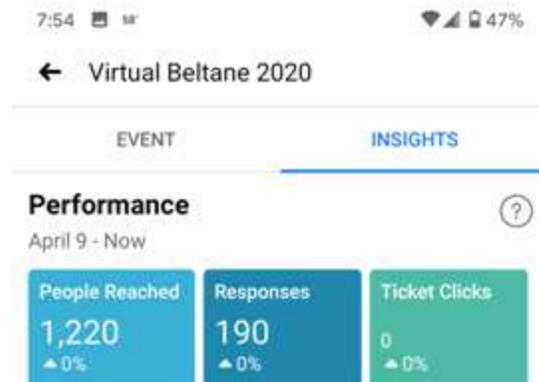


Peak participation times on the day of the event.



## Facebook Event Results:

We posted an event to our Facebook Page for ease of sharing, and for calendar reminders.



The peaks on the first chart below directly reflect dates when the event was shared to other groups. Unfortunately, Facebook Insights currently only offers demographics by binary gender; those are in the lower half of the chart.

### 190 Responses

Total responses over the lifetime of your event.

87 Interested 103 Went



### Age and Gender

The age and gender that people provide in their profiles.

77.3% Women 22.7% Men



## Assessments

### What Worked Well:

1. Lead-up activities generate excitement! You may not see immediate results, but people will participate and post during the event.
2. Posts with images get more engagement! But be sure to include text information, too.
3. Share ad graphics to KSMO and post on your Instagram, Twitter.
4. Tourney- one hour to get everyone settled before starting. Roll20 + WebX for audio/video
5. Usage of the FB event dropped off, but it was important to have for calendar reminders.
6. Photo albums for competitions. Submissions were also posted to main group page and in comments.
7. Use standard event verbiage when appropriate. "Morning Court, armor inspection, etc" for consistency and suspense of belief.
8. Kingdom Court happened-make sure your schedule accommodates this, and you do not schedule activities in conflict with that time frame. We did not use the Facebook Watch party option since comments made in the Watch Party do not post to the original feed.
9. Virtual site tokens.
10. Pop-up courts- pre-recorded or live.
11. Stream Zoom to FB Live for courts.
12. Post list of class recordings at the end of the day.
13. Utilizing Schedule Post options, Announcements (rotate/change as needed throughout the day), and Categories/hashtags. However, this was only effective for people with social media acumen. Associated recommendation is below.

### What We Would Improve:

1. We really wish we had created a site booklet, available with the site token, explaining how to get the most of out of Facebook Groups, and how to access classes on Zoom. Facebook explanations would have included hashtags and category tags as search functions, uploading to albums, and accessing announcements.
2. Numerous communication lapses and assumptions left us scrambling to set up Zoom classes at the last minute. Classes were scheduled at the same time, or overlapping, which requires more than one paid account. Luckily, we were able to manage the situation, but we did not get all of the classes recorded. We did not set them to auto-record, so that instructors could obtain verbal consent from all participants before doing so. And, then, we forgot to notify instructors that classes were not automatically recording. We did end up with six of the ten classes available for viewing later, so not all was lost. A recommendation for video permission verbiage has been submitted to the Kingdom Social Media Officer.
3. Several members had difficulty accessing Zoom, for various reasons. Streaming a Zoom class to Facebook Live could help overcome this issue, and would also have resolved our recording mistakes.

4. We did not leverage our baronial website. We had a page that consisted basically of the Black Star ad, but did not have time to do anything else. Downloadable site tokens, site booklets, and platform usage tutorials would have been useful and accessible on the website.

#### The Unexpected:

1. There were audio and video problems with the Roll20 platform, and a call-in WebX chat was setup on the fly for participants experiencing difficulty. We were fortunate to have two highly tech literate Marshals running the activity, or it may have failed.
2. Competition winner from overseas- Prize shipping budgets- may include overseas
3. Group membership approval settings- be prepared for mass invitations.
4. Be aware that minors may be in open chats! The minimum age is 13+ for Facebook.
5. Populace members shared photos and video from past Beltane events, including Bardic performances. They were a great addition!

#### Recommendations:

1. Virtual Entourage- Make sure your Event Stewards and B&B eat lunch!
2. Designated Hosts for open chats, Moderator shifts (it was hectic responding to questions while managing the schedule and moderating chats, etc.).
3. If no SMD, Seneschal must be heavily involved to ensure Social Media Policy compliance.
4. Tech support available, especially in first few hours. By phone is helpful! Google Voice is your friend.
5. Schedule classes as individual events, stream from within.
6. Court- have notes posted by camera. Conduct pre-court sound checks. Know your software before beginning.
7. Don't forget to have your herald open and close court.
8. Be sure that when you first open Zoom before streaming to FB Live for court and are having conversations that they're suitable to be recorded!
9. Be. Punctual. People aren't sitting in court waiting. They're at home and easily distracted.
10. Be sure to use the same key words in every post about a specific activity so searches are effective.
11. Recommended recording disclaimer.
12. Tips for instructors: minimize the number of open tabs/apps on device for best quality sound and video.
13. Utilize mute all/raise hand options in Zoom. Be sure all students know how to use them first!
14. Be sure to set up Group Rules. We had numerous newcomers join the group.
15. Don't forget to submit your Event Reports!
16. Review Analytics (Facebook Insights) leading up to, and for a couple of days past your event to see your level of participation.
17. Site booklet with tips and how-tos: Sort by recent and by new posts, how to shut off notifications for certain posts, using Categories and Hashtags for searches, how to access Announcements.

## Contacts

For additional information about any of our activities, please feel free to contact us!

### General Inquiries

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### Beltane Brawl

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