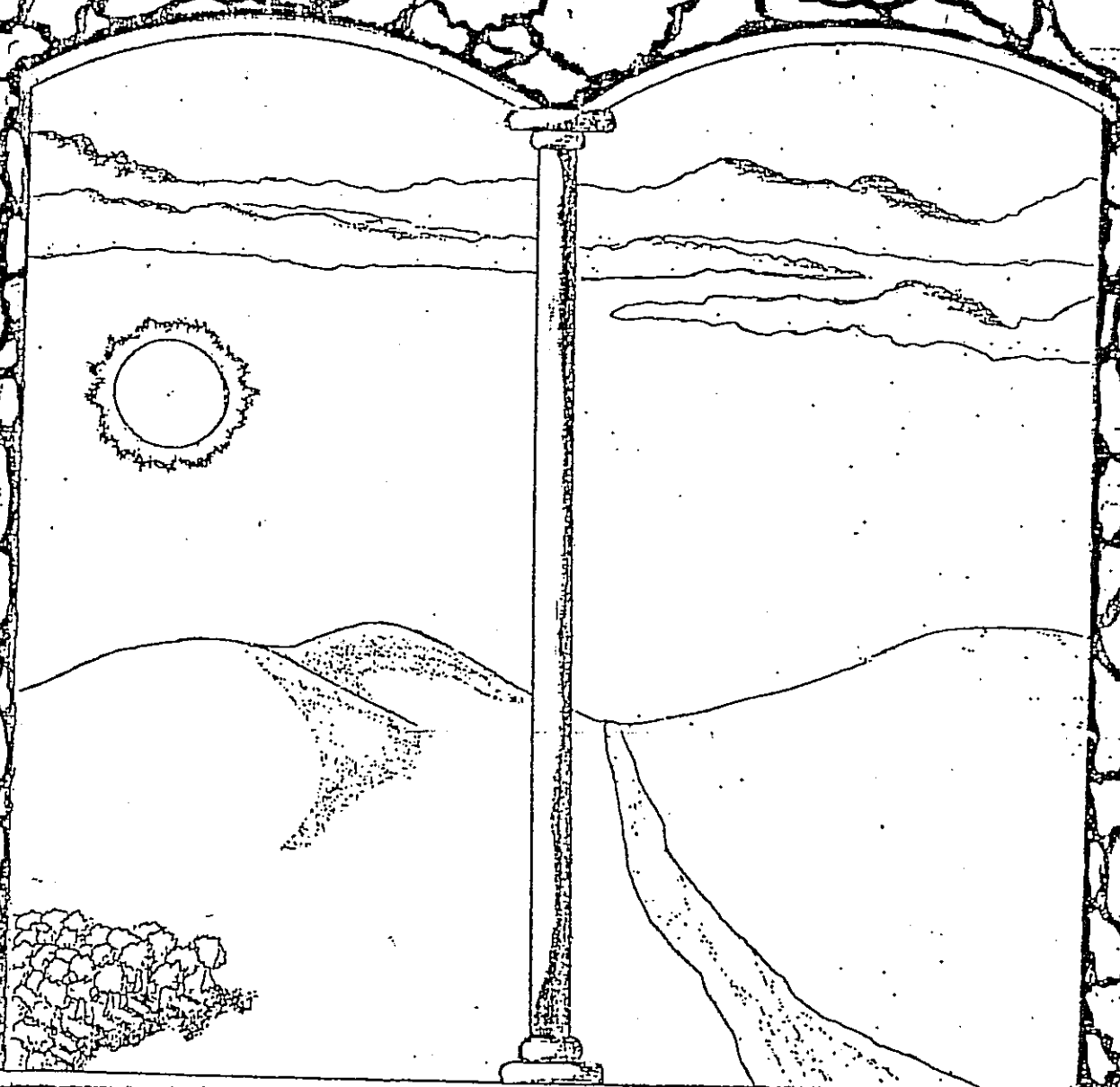


AMTGARD

SUPPLEMENT #9-

Amtgard: a perspective



Some of the varying perceptions of Amtgard, set down here for posterity. Editor- Aramithris, cover- Astrean (Brian Coleman)

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AMTGARD: A MEDIEVAL AND FANTASY SOCIETY

by J.W. Donnelly and Michele Ellington

"Back to the past" organizations are springing up all over the United States. Groups that study and emulate Scottish Highlanders, the Civil War, and the mountain men of the old west are all popular aspects of this phenomenon. The medieval era is also a favorite, and groups which utilize "heavy" weapons and armor such as the Society for Creative Anachronism and Markland are firmly established. Newer on the scene is the advent of light weapons combat, a system employing no protective body armor and safe, foam padded weapons. The idea is widespread, but few people have organized. One of the more successful groups to "take the ball and run with it" has been AMTGARD: Kingdom of the Burning Lands. Foam weapon societies have the advantage of "easy playability". Very little equipment or initial outlay of expense is required. A prospective combatant can provide his or her own garb and equipment for under \$25.00. Most AMTGARD members are capable of and do participate on the battlefield. AMTGARD's major claim to fame and its biggest departure from other medieval societies is its emphasis on the creative and fantasy aspects derived from both the medieval period and from more modern fictional literature. The persona a member will take within this society is more likely to be a Tolkein style elf or a Viking berserker than a feudal baron or man-at-arms. The use of a class system delineating each participant's options further defines roles on the battlefield, with such choices as archer, barbarian, assassin, and so on. Certain personas and classes are allowed to utilize a set of rules simulating the application of magic, a concept very much in vogue with gamers and high adventure style movies. In summation, AMTGARD is a recreational and educational society that seeks to recreate the heroic atmosphere of the quests, courts, feasts and battles of the ancient and medieval eras.

Personas

AMTGARD, like most "re-creation" groups, can be characterized as a role-playing club. Members create a "persona", complete with name, history, manner of dress, and idiosyncracies. Unlike many other re-creation groups, AMTGARD is not very restrictive in the selection of your persona. All we ask is that, while any period of history or genre of literature may be drawn upon, your persona fit into the club's medieval/fantasy setting, and not be any specific historic or literary figure. As a result of this, we have a wide variety of cultures and genres represented among our populace.

Some players prefer historic personas. Ariona Mixtatl of the Bear Clan is an Aztec priestess. Aron Nelsson is a Viking berserker. Kalibria de Grenouille is a French pirate. Karl of Red Dragon Manor is a teutonic knight. Dachs is an escaped slave of Roman/Gothic parentage. Joella Llewellyn Clairmonde is a Welsh noblewoman. Hezekiah Tokeoi is a samurai, and Deth the Direhearted is a Moorish warrior.

Other players choose to create their own setting, such as Tawnee Darkfalcon, an Amazon Indian shaman. Many draw their personas from fantasy literature. Elross Blueraven, Aredhel, and Gilos Dawnhope are just a few of our Tolkenian elves. M'Deth of Benden is a Dragonrider of Pern. Washomi Lonelywolf is an incarnation of the Eternal Champion. Talon Skyfire is a Wolfrider, and Elycia Windsinger comes to us from the Harpy's Flight series.

A few of our members have taken a more bizarre path to the selection of personas. Ozymandus is a transdimensional mutant from a post-nuclear holocaust world. Rift Gorhan Tele is an alien starpilot whose ship crashed in the Burning Lands. And Mockvere is a part amphibian part water plant swamp dweller who wields an airplane propeller as his weapon.

These and hundreds of other personas mesh to create a special ambiance at our gatherings. The varied perspectives, costumes and weapons create a rich visual and social melting pot.

Magic

Once you have determined who you are by selecting your persona, you must decide what you are. On the battlefield you may choose to play any one of a number of classes, covering most fantasy literature archetypes. While you may play only one class at a time, with its restrictions and advantages, you may play a different class every battlegame if you choose.

AMTGARD is unique in that several classes utilize a system of magic. Druids are at one with nature, and can call on it for protection or use it to attack their foes. Bards are capable of charming and mesmerizing their opponents, forcing them to fulfill personal quests or to simply sit and listen. Wizards wield powers elemental; lightning, fire, ice and wind, as well as death in many forms. Healers, well, they heal. And resurrect the dead, cure disease, and cleanse poison. They can lash out with that same power to deal injury or destruction.

This "magic" is executed through the use of verbal "spells" or padded foam balls. Each spell, of the approximately one hundred between all four classes, has a brief incantation, a range, and usually several classes against whom it will not work. Magic-users have a limited number of spell points, with which they select from the list available to their class. Magical defenses for their teammates may be purchased, as well as offensive spells. They must also use spell points to purchase the use of their weapons. Magic-users are the most powerful - and the most vulnerable - players on the battlefield. Tactics and strategy take on whole new dimensions when you are facing off against magic as well as weapons.

Origins

AMTGARD was founded in early 1983 in El Paso, Texas. Originally a small group of swords and sorcery enthusiasts, its early roots could be traced to individuals with experience both in role-playing and the medieval combat arts. AMTGARD typically draws many members from such organizations as fencing clubs, fantasy literature clubs, and various re-creationist groups. A demographic cross section would yield a high percentage of college and high school students, along with individuals from the military. In 1987, the parent chapter incorporated as AMTGARD: Kingdom of the Burning Lands, and soon thereafter received its tax exemption as an educational public foundation. The early AMTGARD years had an ambience akin to quest roleplaying, a genre very similar to the Conan movies. This is still largely true, due to the AMTGARD system utilizing battlefield magic and archetypal player classes. However, status as a non-profit organization echoed an ongoing shift toward other additional activities such as staging medieval feasts and weddings; period and genre oriented contests in such areas as medieval garb and cooking, poetry, chess, art and hand crafted work; and research into relevant period topics. 1988 saw rapid growth and expansion into other areas from Colorado to Florida, with the most successful new chapters being the Kingdom of the Emerald Hills in Dallas and the Grand Duchy of Barad-Duin in Austin, Texas. Thus far, there has been little centralized control, the parent group in El Paso providing expertise and logistical support to the fledgling chapters.

AMTGARD: Kingdom of the Burning Lands is currently exploring the possibilities of franchising our non-profit status for the accelerating proliferation of additional AMTGARD groups. For further information about AMTGARD, write J.W. Donnelly at 1416 Oakdale, El Paso, Texas, 79925. Or write Michele Ellington, 2324 Federal, El Paso, Texas, 79930. We will be happy to answer any questions, and, if you are interested, help you start a chapter of AMTGARD in your area.

COUPLE SEALS WEDDING VOWS MEDIEVAL STYLE
by Pat Henry (reprinted from the El Paso
Times, September, 1986)

Couple seals wedding vows medieval style

By Pat Henry
Times Staff Writer

Once upon a time Kathleen Elmore dreamed of marrying a knight in shining armor.

"I didn't know that would come true literally," Kathleen said.

At noon Saturday in Album Park, Kathleen, wearing a medieval-style gown she'd embroidered with forget-me-nots, was married to Brian Donnelly, costumed in chain mail he'd forged himself.

The vows were traditional. The trappings were storybook.

In attendance were about 75 friends, relatives and costumed members of Amtgard and the Society of Creative Anachronisms, organizations whose members adopt medieval garb and customs.

"Lords, ladies, gentles, all," proclaimed Len Nelson, a Viking herald, "pray attend to this wedding of two people who dared to dream."

Kathleen arrived in a litter and marched down the aisle to a drum cadence. After the ceremony, guests feasted on roast beef, meat pastries and a castle cake which Brian cut with a sword.

"Hopefully someday we'll have a castle of our own," he said.
Brian and Kathleen are longtime

friends, both 1979 graduates of Eastwood High School. Their courtship began when they were anthropology majors at the University of Texas at El Paso.

At first, Kathleen felt like a damsel in distress when Brian took her to meetings of the Society of Creative Anachronisms and Amtgard.

"There is no better way to do things," Brian explained to her, "than this dream of the medieval world the way it should have been."

As Brian spent afternoons jousting with foam and rattan weapons on the field of honor, Kathleen fell under the spell of the distaff world — embroidery, cooking and nature lore, eight centuries old.

When they plighted their troth six months ago, Kathleen's moth-

er, Ellen Elmore, suggested a medieval setting for their wedding.

Kathleen stitched most of the tunics, gowns and capes worn by the wedding party.

Pat Knapp, a history teacher at Burges High School and a baroness in the society, said the Elmore-Donnelly rites were the first medieval ceremony in the El Paso area.

"Lots of people have theme weddings. You hear of sky divers getting married as they jump out of planes," Knapp said. "Look at it historically. The marriage ceremony, with its flowers and gowns, certainly goes back to the Middle Ages."

Army Master Sgt. Carl Lemke, costumed in the doublet of a 14th century German, knelt to kiss the bride's hand. Later, he explained his involvement in the society:

"I've always been interested in

history and it's hard not to learn about history when you design costumes and weapons. We give demonstrations in libraries, schools and at the El Paso Street Festival," Lemke said. "I used to fight in tournaments, but I'm 37 now and it's a hard contact sport. I make armor — we made all this armor you see here."

The wedding enchanted Venita Elmore, Kathleen's grandmother.

"They went to a lot of trouble — not trouble, really, because they did it the way they wanted," she said.

One wedding guest, a rat named Basil, nestled in the Viking gear worn by herald Nelson.

"This is a baby rat. I brought him because the grown-up rat ran away," Nelson said.

The newlyweds planned to ride into the sunset toward the Gila National Forest, where they will honeymoon.

Brian has enlisted in the Navy. Wherever he is stationed, the couple will seek a "kingdom" of the society, a worldwide organization, for their happily-ever-aftering.

by Stefanie Ewing and Patricia Amparan
(reprinted from the Sabre, May, 1987)

by Stefanie Ewing
and Patricia Amparan

If you should pass Memorial Park on a Saturday afternoon and see medieval maidens and warriors romping in the grass, don't worry. No, it is not the 15th century, nor should you consult your psychiatrist. It's probably members of "Amtgard" playing a few games.

Most people might think this a little peculiar, but it's nice to know that in an age when technology and modern conveniences are the natural order of things, there are still organizations that provide outlets for those who wish to experience the thrills of an earlier time.

Amtgard is a group of people of all ages who meet every Saturday at Memorial Park to relive the days of jousts, lords, ladies, barbarians and serfs, and to mix it all with a touch of fantasy.

"Amtgard is a chance for people to express themselves culturally as well as a chance to have fun on Saturday," said former King Ardehel Kemenvul Rex, also known as Graham Schatte. "Anyone interested in medieval/fantasy/recreation, should come out and have a look." The members of Amtgard try to exemplify the

The food that was judged this month was sauerbraten (meat with sour cream sauce), chicken with wine and mushroom sauce, creamed new potatoes and cookies playfully dubbed "dog-drop" which were actually spicy and flavorful gingerbread and molasses cookies. The piece de resistance was the barbecued ribs. The aroma from all the food made the mouth water and the taste buds tingle.

Jousting, archery, and sword and shield tournaments take place during the day. All events are performed with simulated weapons and with the opponents in appropriate garb. The events look rough, but the weapons are made of tape and foam rubber, so the blows taken really don't hurt.

Along with the weekly battles, the Amtgard members have crown elections twice a year to name a new King, who comes complete with throne and subjects. This is a relatively new idea; the prime minister used to be elected, and the king had to fight for his position.

Schatte, who was king of Amtgard until last week, is a 1982 graduate of Eastwood. His princess consort was

true virtues of loyalty, honor and chivalry, words that have become virtually obsolete.

Amtgard was founded in February, 1983, by Peter LeGrue. It was patterned after a group from Washington, D.C., called the Foam Fighting Society. There are now approximately 518 members in Amtgard, three of whom are currently students at Eastwood.

Junior Kiersten Coe's Amtgard name is Arinēkā, the water bearer/wench, and senior Annettē Wārden is Pager. She is currently on trial to be an Isacarian warrior. Junior Shannon McGuire is Crimson Heartsblood, a warrior. Even El Pasoans like KVIA-TV news anchorman Horst Longenecker have been members of Amtgard's Golden Lions.

"You can come here and be someone else, anyone or anything you want to be," said McGuire.

Members of Amtgard choose original names for themselves. Many of the names come from J.R.R. Tolkien, or "The Road Warrior," however many of them clearly come from the Amtgardian's imagination.

At feasts members compete for the best garb, weapons, art and cooking.

Chris Donnelly, known to Amtgard members as Gwynne.

"This (El Paso) is the Parent Chapter in the US. It's non-profit, and the main reason we're in all this is because it's fun and it's a way to get out our aggressions," said Donnelly.

Art mainly consisted of sketches of the various characters of Amtgard, but there were also a few from books, and favorite characters from Star Trek. This was truly an example of a combining of the times.

Last weekend at the Crown Feast, McGuire was named Lt. of Isacars and Coe was given an Order of The Rose certificate for winning the Pente tournament.

"Every Saturday, you can come out and have fun. Dues are optional, otherwise, you just fight," said Robert Herbig, U.T.El Paso student, also known as Siegfried AUF herbenjach. "We'll kill you just the same."

At last week's elections, J.W. Donnelly (Aramithris) was chosen to be king. He named Kim Shoddy, also known as Calibra DeGrenouille to serve as his princess consort.

OUTLANDISH, 1988

FORWARD...The Claw/Corsair fast convoy departs the Burning Lands.

Rising well before first light the small party of adventurers saw to the loading of their pack beasts, readied their steeds and departed their various steeds and manors for the rendezvous point. Conferring sotto voice in the crepuscular light of an already weary dawn they decided the order of march and mounting up fled the rising furnace blast of the angry wasteland sun. Encouraging their willing beasts the group pressed on to the cooler northern lands.

Impressive, huh?

One small omission. Our predawn contingent was by no means the first of Amtgard to arrive at Outlandish. There were Amtgarders there days before us. Let me tell you campers, when Amtgard is at an SCA event before the SCA arrives I do believe it may be time we considered holding our own event. Mull this over a bit whilst I chronicle the three days of activity.

(Mulling time inserted)

The aforementioned fast convoy arrived and unloaded after a quick perusal of the area for friendlies only to have said friendlies appear suddenly out of the woods and declare our proposed camping site a "que ca ca" and graciously assist in the removal of vehicles, equipment, and living bodies to the preferred site which was, again, the top of that @#!@##! hill. Two hours later in the face of an incipient thunderstorm we are snug and secure in the bosom of "Amtgard on the Hill".

Remainder of the day into the evening hours were spent stowing gear, greeting later arrivals, starting the perpetual pot of chicken stew, and sampling the potables just to be sure they had survived the trip in good form. (We weren't too sure so sampling went on and on. Abedon was especially conscientous.)

IMPROMPTU AWARD TO THE CLAW
LEGION: "ORDER OF THE PER-
PETUAL PIT OF FIRE"

The weather basically

sucked all weekend. Hot, windy, and occasional Texas Rain (drops approximately 3 inches in diameter, 18 inches apart and arriving at a speed of not less than 56 mph).

TITLE AWARDED FOR THE DURATION
OF OUTLANDISH: BE IT KNOWN
THAT HONIO HENCEFORTH BEAR THE
APPELLATION OF "COUNT OF
CACCIATORE"

Merchant's row sparsely populated, SCA events not well coordinated, and a certain malaise of spirit noted amongst most SCA groups (Pirates weren't pirating, no Crimson Company carping on the color red, Rolling Thunder doing insipid thunder and no rolling at all and the Citadel downright surly). Amtgard, on the other hand, feasted with many new friends, held an impromptu court, and engaged in at least one cut throat marathon card game (Ryah clear winner with Leah a respectable second). There was a good demo with Amtgards from Colorado (Mistic Valley of the North), Austin (Barad-Duin), Dallas (Emerald

Hills), and Burning Lands.
Many introductions:

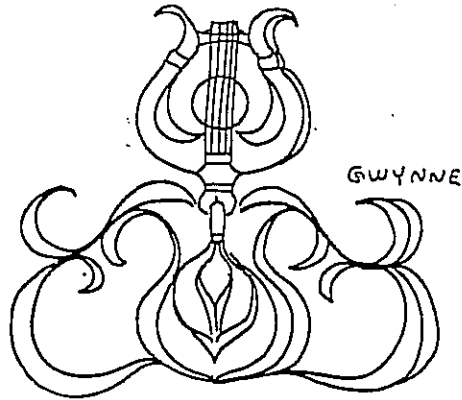
"Dutchess Sylaina meet Aramithris (You two can cement inter-kingdom relations later.), Nevaron this is MiLady Leah. (Warning note: MiLady he is a SOUTHERN barbarian. You are probably familiar only with the more refined, civilized Northern species. Associate at your own risk.) Theo greet Lord Delphos. (Theo, no loot - NO LOOT, THEO. THEO! Sorry about that Delphos he does get carried away sometimes. Theo, give Lord Delphos' hair back to him!) Duke Ahрмаand I am pleased to introduce Countess Gwynne. (Now, I want you two to make a real effort to get along.) Sir Nithanalorn meet Fatima (You two seem to have a lot in common). Naes meet Abedon. (Oh, I see you two have already met.)

NEWS FLASH: BURNING LANDS
AMTIGARDER STRIPPED OF NAME.....

Last weekend, in a ceremony suitable to the occasion Naes was forever barred from using the appellation "Stripling". This name, though honorably earned over a year ago at this same event, was deemed insufficient to properly indicate his talents and predilections. A suggestion for a new name was immediately forthcoming following the ceremony to wit:

"Prince of Hares"
(Never caught on
the off hop)

Personally, this author finds the new name needlessly suggestive, rude, crude, totally socially unacceptable and probably accurate.



To resume the narrative after being rudely interrupted by our amature reporter; several other occasions of note, expressions of disbelief, and filthy gossip:

Aramithris dancing? Aramithris dancing an Irish reel!

"M'Deth singing?" "Well, we assume it was singing. The words rhymed."

"I didn't dream Nithanalorn had such great legs. Just goes to show you can never really judge a bishop by his cassock."

"No, his name is spelled Ahрмаand not.....
G U I D O S A R D U C H I
I don't care how good his accent is."

"Quick, Ariona, pass the Pepto Bismol. Gwynne is telling jokes again."

"Gee, Gilos. I didn't even know there was a cookie tossing contest; understand you won."

AWARD FOR THE WARWEST BACK SIDE
UNCONDITIONALLY AWARDED TO RYAH

And speaking of ends, this is an opportunity to finish our tale. Don't forget the Amtgard Camping Trip/Barbarian Pot Luck Feast/Plunder Tourney July 22, 23, 24th. See you there.

Countess Gwynne

Unto the Populace, We bring you greetings.

That small club that many of us have grown up with; our escape from the mundane web; our ability to be ourselves in expression and thought has blossomed. On the 11th day of June, 1988 we arrived on site to the Emerald Hills, a glade surrounded with evergreens, birch, and oak embracing a mystical, cool creek. A cool evening breeze scattered fireflies throughout the encampment occasionally illuminating the flags of three separate Amtgard armies as they reveled in wine and song testing the bond we now call Amtgard.

On the first day the Kingdom of the Burning Lands, with a vanguard of Barad-Duin took to the field and met the Emerald Hills in battle. The engagement was located within the encampment of the Sable Pride. A total of seven separate engagements took place of which the Burning Lands and Barad-Duin were victorious in four. Were it not for the experience of three knights, Sir Theo, Sir Hellspawn, and Arch Duke Aredhel the outcome could have been much different for although relatively inexperienced the Emerald Hills and Barad-Duin show much talent in the art of combat and promise to become formidable opponents.

We were also impressed by the good nature and chivalry shown upon the field by all participants. To each of the three knights who accompanied us we award a Griffon to each.

The next engagement was located within a large grassy clearing. A flag battle with brown (and green) eyes against blue eyes. We are proud to say the blue eyes were victorious.

These battles helped prove we were no longer separate groups rather we were all Amtgard. This feeling was strengthened as the day progressed as both Kingdom of the Emerald Hills and Barad-Duin shown with their expressions of art and song.

As evening approached and the fireflies made one believe in fairies the first intra-kingdom coronation and second intra-kingdom court took place (the first being the "Gathering of the Clans" at the past Outlandish). Rena, chosen monarch of Emerald Hills was by our hand in this enchanted land made queen. Fair Rena was also dubbed a Knight of the Crown. Long may this line flourish!

There is another piece of legend which, as much as anything else, made us realize just how special Amtgard really is. I had just returned from the field of battle and was feeling quite well. A cool breeze bathed my face and hot coffee warmed the inner man. I chanced to look down and saw my foot outlined on the keep of Barad-Duin's banner. "How can this be? Why does not your banner fly in honor from your encampment?" I asked of Duke

Ahrmaand and Lord Nithanalorn. They were as astonished as I was and gracefully accepted the geas of a service to benefit Amtgard as recompense for their lamentable lack of vigilance in properly guarding their banner. The matter settled we all drank and made merry throughout the day.

As night approached the court ended with high spirits for all. We enjoyed traveling from encampment to encampment. I eventually found myself trekking on quite alone and looked up only to see an ominous void where Barad-Duin's banner should fly. To spare the good people from Barad-Duin further embarrassment I slipped into the Sable Prides encampment to retrieve the stolen banner. It was returned the following morning and the first Banner Guard to grace Amtgard's first Duchy was promptly created and all was well. Later in the day the birds were singing in the trees about rites of passage and other such things and we did again grace Barad-Duin's encampment. Whether it was their look of confidence which prompted my question I am still not sure but I said, "pray, tell me where is your banner your Grace?" The look of horror which appeared on his face was matched only by that on the faces of the Ducal Banner Guard. Across the glade Barad-Duin's banner had once again mysteriously eluded its guards and was again flying proudly in the wrong place! I stared sternly from face to face (desperately hiding a smile) and declared that a strip of green cloth should be hung from their fine banner until officially removed by my royal self. I declared this royal symbol of royal censure should be constructed of purest puke green and lavishly

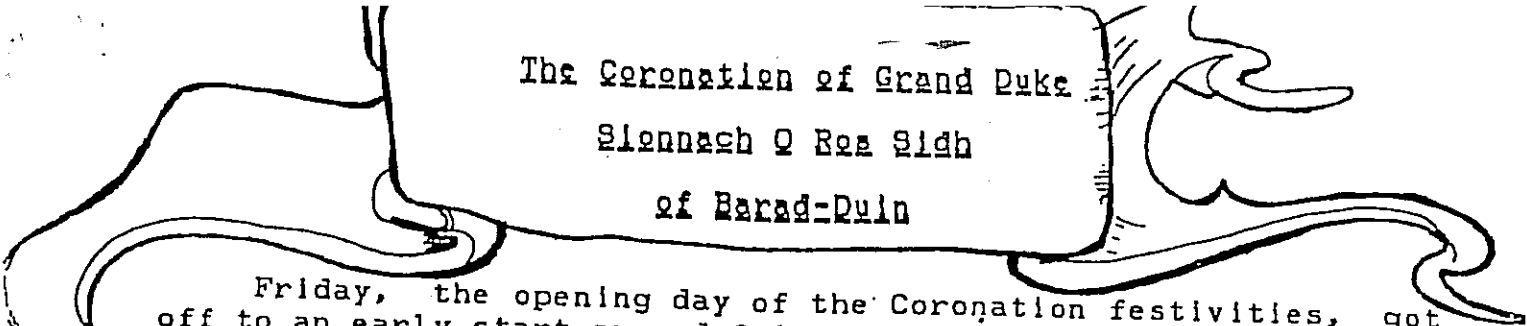
decorated to be passed from Amtgard to Amtgard group when well and truly earned in order to further bind all Amtgard in friendship and enhance the wonderful bond which had developed that weekend. The name of the green symbol will be henceforth known as "The Green Weenie" and I suggest to all Amtgard groups everywhere they guard their banners (and firewood, and potables, and nubile women) well when in the company of their brothers in spirit are near.

Yours in Amtgard,

M'DETH

M'Deth, Rex II





The Coronation of Grand Duke
Slennach O Rea Sidh
of Barad-Duin

Friday, the opening day of the Coronation festivities, got off to an early start around 3 in the afternoon. A cloud of dust appeared in the distance, and soon a coach was seen approaching (apparently in such haste it had left its horses behind.) As it came to a stop in the settling dust, Grand Duke Aramithris of the Burning Lands climbed out in relief after his long journey. A couple of hours later, others began arriving, first in a trickle, then in a flood as darkness approached. They came from Barad-Duin, they came from the Burning Lands, from the Emerald Hills, they came from the new baronies of Shadowmere and Dreadwood Hold; barbarians and knights, wizards and warriors, scouts and archers, druids, monks, and many others. As night fell, the howls of rampaging barbarians echoed through the darkness.

At daybreak on the day of the Coronation, the Dawn Patrol considerably roused late slumberers so they wouldn't miss any of the festivities. After breakfast the battles began, raging for hours under the gentle warmth of Barad-Duin in early September. Things went smoothly after a few differences in rule interpretation were ironed out, and the reeves managed to maintain some semblance of order. After lunch, things slowed down for a bit, as people met and got to know each other, catching up with events in the other principalities and making new friends. King M'Deth of the Burning Lands offered advice on techniques of battle, and was attended by peoples of all lands. The peaceful setting was misleading, however, as it also served the purpose of allowing the populace to rest and ready themselves for War.

Finally, it was time, and the forces of the lands lined up on the field of battle. The Kingdom of the Burning Lands versus the Kingdom of the Emerald Hills. To make up differences in numbers, the populace of Barad-Duin was divided amongst the two armies. As the two forces parted, travelling to opposite ends of the battlefield, a hush fell, finally to be broken by the charges of both armies, meeting in clamorous battle near the Emerald Hills standard. After a fierce battle, the Burning Lands emerged with the flag, taking it to stand next to their own. As the forces of the Emerald Hills regrouped and retaliated, battle was joined once more, this time resulting in the capture of the Queen of the Emerald Hills. Despite recurring attacks by the Emerald Hills, the Burning Lands finally emerged victorious, and both sides retired from the field.

The war over, everyone rested and refreshed themselves, then began preparations for the main event soon to come. As twilight approached, people began gathering for the Coronation. King M'Deth made the opening speech, speaking on the growth of Amtgard, followed by the final court of Grand Duke Ahrmaand Seregon, as he spoke on the progress of Barad-Duin in the past months, and its potential for the future. Grand Duke Seregon

then gave his final awards, the chief one being the granting of the title 'Lord' to Derydlus, for his extensive work on the behalf of Amtgard in Barad-Duin. He then announced official recognition of the two new baronies of Barad-Duin: Shadowmere and Dreadwood Hold; he also forged new bonds of peace between our duchy and the Emerald Hills by inducting the Queen into House Seregon house. Sionnach then entered, and the title of Grand Duke was officially granted by King M'Deth as the former Grand Duke stepped down. King M'Deth bestowed the title of 'Viscount' to Ahrmaand Seregon, and the title of 'Lady' to former consort Sylaina. Grand Duke Sionnach then announced his choice of consort, and Tanaide Saerlithe Cu Chaille stepped forth to join him. After his speech of acceptance, the festivities began.

The feast began, prepared with great skill and endurance by Smooth Rurik, and cheered by the populace. Rayn the Wanderer provided his much sought after refreshment, and people settled back to enjoy the evening. The entertainment began with a marvelous dance by Terras Ember, followed by many kinds of entertainment while people feasted and enjoyed. Of special note were the marvelous tales of Ragnar the storyteller, and a most unusual dance by the mysterious, bearded Lady Fatima (who bore a most uncanny resemblance to our own Sir Nathanalorn.) Finally the night wore on and the revelers departed to the pavilions to begin the REAL festivities.

There was much rejoicing and wandering as people revelled from pavilion to pavilion and the campfires gleamed in the darkness. All finally grew quiet, the stillness broken occassionally by the far-off cry of "HHOOUSSSE!! UGH!!"

Strangely enough, although the sun rose early on the next morning, not much else did. Especially the populace. Finally, however, people began wandering about and the day got underway. Slowly, but it did. After a fine continental breakfast, some of the populace began a battle, probably to see if they could. It raged on for awhile and turned out to be quite enjoyable. A group gathered to demonstrate their skill at archery, while others sparred in small groups.

King M'Deth and Grand Duke Sionnach held the closing court of the weekend, where King M'Deth passed out awards and extended his congratulations to Barad-Duin for an enjoyable and successful event. There was a sense of contentment as people loaded up to leave. Even though not everything had occurred that had been originally planned, nothing had really gone wrong, no one was seriously hurt, and everyone had a great time.

VIVAT BARAD-DUINI

VIVAT GRAND DUKE SIONNACHI

VIVATI

{ Eltarandae
Sorontar }

Dear Friends of Amtgard,

We finally made it to Italy. Aagar has been here a month and I've been here 1 1/2 weeks. I'm getting homesick for my costumes and dressing up. The mundane life constantly is getting to me. I tell people I've met what I enjoy and they all look at me weirdly. I swore one such was about to bring out her cross and shove it in my face!

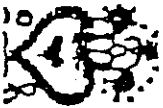
Starting an Amtgard would be quite difficult. ^{The men} work on weekends. Not many have cars and no telephones. You have to be rich and then be patient 6 months before you can have one. Forget it. It forces me to write also, which I hate.

I found the "mother" of Amtgard. While back East in D.C. I got a hold of Dominus of Dagorhir. In the last handout I got before I left there was correspondence between Dominus and Aramithris. Since I was in calling distance, I called him. He and another guy came over and we compared Amtgard to Dagorhir. I hate to say this, but I like the simplicity of Dagorhir to Amtgard.

While talking I mentioned something about a guy named LaGrue. Sure they knew him! Said they kicked him out about 4 years ago and said he went to Texas. Ta Da! We are a break-off of Dagorhir.

Here is a list of likeness and differences:

- 1). Their weapons are made like ours exactly. (Red, green, blue, weapons also). Bows and arrows like ours. Shields padded.
- 2). No magic!!!! No classes like healer, assassin, barbarian, etc. They are all warriors basically.
- 3). No tennis shoes, jeans, and/or any kind of mundane clothing is allowed. They run a garb check and weapon check every time they play. If you or your weapons do not qualify you do not play. Very strict. We've gotten too soft on garb quality.
- 4). They only fight once a month because of the wide radius from which people must come. They do put on demos all over though. I went and took two other guys with seven others to an overnight demo at a girl's college in Pennsylvania. Their guy's costumes are great. Dominus is of "Roman" persuasion - All leather and hand crafted.
- 5). Their time period is from about 300 A.D. and up to 1600 so you can imagine Romans in it.
- 6). They have no royalty. No knights. The only real title given is "Champion". You get that for serving and fighting Dagorhir at least two years.



7.) They average the same fighters monthly as we do and have as many females.

8). Everyone has one death. When it is finished, it is finished. They plan different games than we do. Maybe you would like to try two of them. Wounds and deaths same.

A). This one is called "Highlander". Everyone and any number can play. You play this in an open area. Everyone carries a sword, dagger, and shield. (Dagger and shield are optional). You must have a cutting weapon. When the game is started, you find someone to meet eye to eye with. You cannot fight until you both agree to fight by making eye contact. Back stabbing is not allowed or surprise attacks. Only through eye contact. You fight until one of you dies. If you die, you lay down and the one who killed you has to put the dagger or sword to your throat and as he is sliding the weapon across the throat he has to say "There can be only one". This part of the killing has to be done in five seconds or the "killed" one is resurrected and fights again. If an injured one is left alone with no eye contact than in 10 seconds he is resurrected again to fight. Don't leave injured ones around. This is played until "There is only one". It's a fun game.

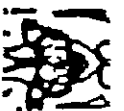
B). Another is called "Mounted Warrior". Everyone can play and any number can play. There is one mounted warrior for every 3 walking in this game. The walking are on their knees fighting and the mounted are standing. Technically you have 2 teams. Game starts....All wounds are obtained the same for both teams. If a mounted's leg is wounded he must kneel as his "horse" is gone but his leg is not wounded until hit again. The game continues until one team is dead.

Well, I hope you enjoy a change for once. We would love hearing from any of you. Please write to show you still exist. That there is still sanity in this world. May Nirvana be kind to you!

Viscountess, Sir Andralaine Escuyer of Stonehelven

EDITOR'S NOTE: This missive was found buried in an old metal casket by elves. The envelope showing return address was nowhere in evidence. Anyone having Andralain's current mailing address is begged to present same to myself so we can let one of our own know that even though gone she is not forgotten.

Gwynne



PERSONAS IN GAMING by Sir Tawnee Darkfalcon

Medieval recreation societies such as Amtgard and the Society for Creative Anachronism have many things in common with role-playing games like Dungeons & Dragons and Fantasy Heroes. Each creates a world in which we would like to live, to which we can escape from the mundanity of everyday life. In each, we create an alternate persona and seek to become that character for the span of time spent in this alternate world. There are, however, factors which make the maintenance of this separate identity more difficult in a medieval society than in a role-playing game.

One of these is constancy. A role-playing game generally consists of six or seven hours sporadically spent in character within the game framework, with frequent breaks out of the game framework to discuss unrelated topics. Because there is a clear dividing line between player and character this does not detract from the maintenance of the separate persona. Medieval societies hold events which are often several days long, and can involve a hundred hours or more spent constantly in character. It is nearly impossible not to step out of your persona, particularly when much of this time is spent in the company of those who are your friends in the mundane world. Because people's medieval personas are usually so like their true personalities, it is difficult to differentiate between them.

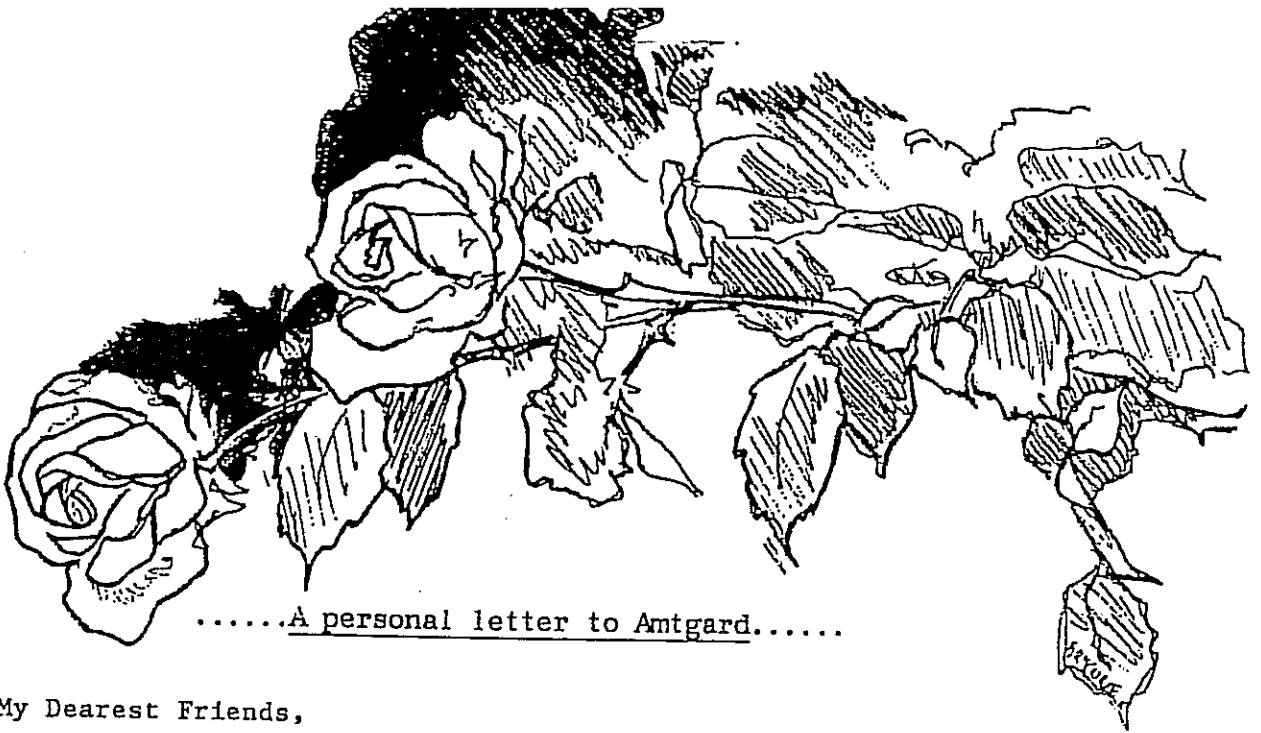
Additionally, in a role-playing game, players compete against a single gamemaster in a cooperative effort with other players. There is usually a strong sense of good and evil, of hero and villain, and a positive goal will be achieved by the characters if they are triumphant. In a medieval society, the other players are your competition, and everyone considers themselves the protagonist, the star of the show. The goals for most of the competitions are as fleeting as those in football or baseball, the victory achieved equally fleeting and meaningless. Rewards are achieved by outstanding personal achievement, regardless of whether this personal glory had a positive or negative effect on the team and goals or not. The lack of important goals and rewards for coherent effort discourage teamwork and cooperation and encourage grandstanding and competitiveness within teams. The high degree of individual competitiveness and the importance of image is what leads to repeated controversy over rule infractions, which forces all involved out of character.

Perhaps most importantly, in medieval societies, we are still locked within the confines of our own body, bound by our everyday physical limitations. We can choose to make our role-playing characters the strongest, or fleetest, or wisest

of the party, singers, lovers, artists. However, unless we make our medieval society personas a reflection of ourselves, it will not be possible for us to play them adequately. The characters may emphasize some facet of ourselves seldom seen, but the potential must exist to be accessed. This factor applies even on an emotional level. Role-playing characters may have intimate relationships with other characters, may be of some socially unacceptable caste, or act in an erratic or abnormal fashion, without casting doubt on their players. Were we, as members of a medieval society, to act in such a fashion, it would have undeniable consequences in our mundane lives. Promiscuity, homosexuality, violent rage, obsessiveness, are all acceptable in role-playing characters, but would seriously affect people's attitude toward your mundane self if attempted in a medieval persona. For those of us who prefer to play characters of a sex or race different than our own, the barriers are obvious.

All of this by no means indicates that all role-players play in character. Nor does it mean that it is impossible to maintain a medieval persona. Excellent garb and equipment, the use of unique linguistic traits such as accents and archaic forms, and keeping company with those interested in keeping in character themselves, all will help you in your own effort. If you create a persona whom you can play within reasonable physical limits, consistently, despite competitiveness and adversity, you may be up to the difficult task of staying in character throughout medieval events.





.....A personal letter to Amtgard.....

My Dearest Friends,

Warmest greetings to you, beloved missed ones. Even though the Meridias sun warms by body, it is thoughts of all of you that fights the chill of my soul.

By the graciousness of the Countess Gwynne, I have received newsletters from the Kingdom. It warms my heart to read and think of you all.

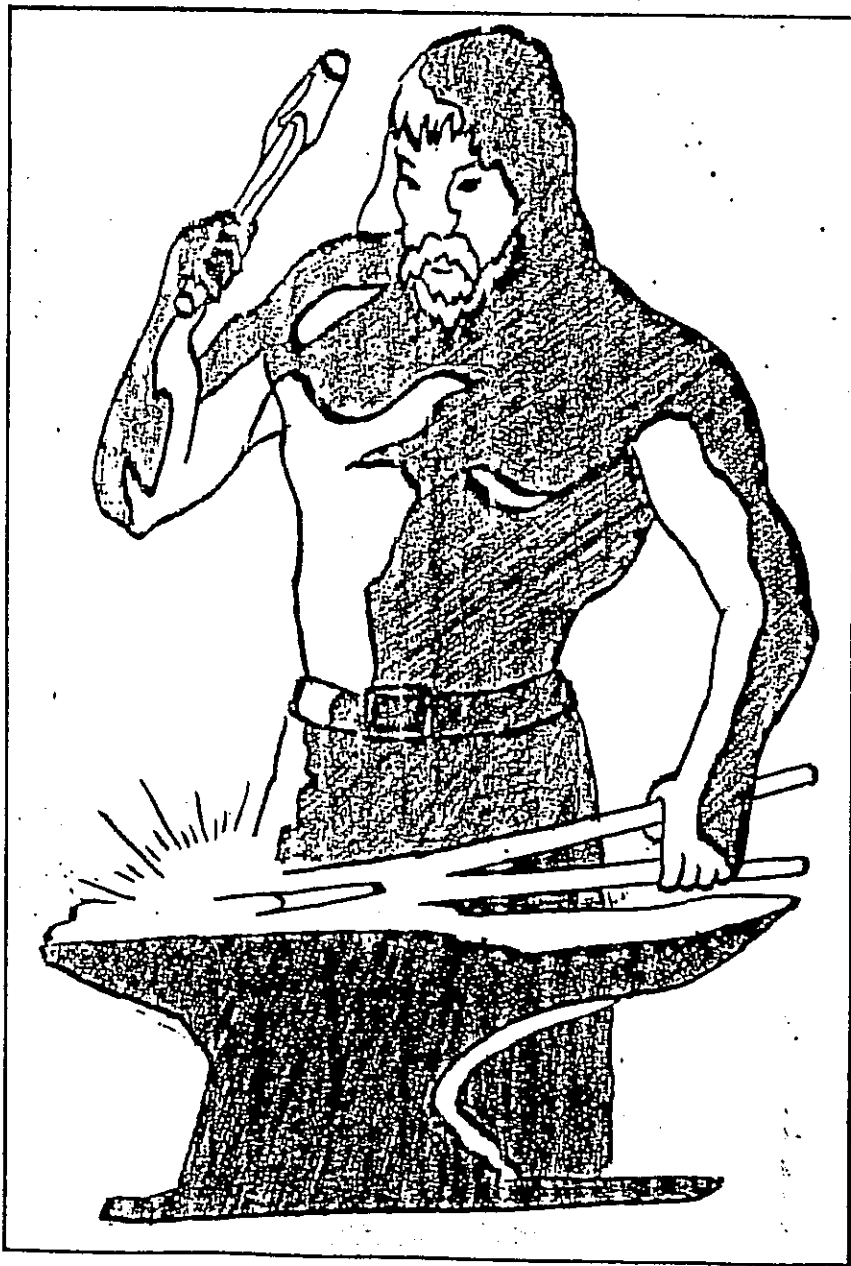
Whatever hospitality and love I have, it was returned to me a hundredfold. You have all given me much more than I can describe, or had ever imagined that one person would receive in a lifetime.

Even though I think of you all very often, it is not often that I take pen to hand to write letters. Once ink and paper and stamps are to hand it seems as all thought leaves my brain.

Elycia and I had found S.C.A. here about a week after we arrived. We are now members of the Shire of Phoenix's Glade. The Shire members are welcoming, and I do not have the feelings of an old, established, exclusive society as I did in the Barony. The first meeting we went to was a revel after the Renaissance Fair where we found them. There was spaghetti, wine, mead, music, belly-dancing, and recalled to me a normal night at my house. The next day, one of the Shire members called me and was worried that Krissy and I would be scared off. HA!

Having experienced some of the negative vibes and misunderstandings between the Citadel and Amtgard, I delicately mentioned Amtgard. To my surprise, there was immediate interest. Weekend before last we had fighter practice at my house, and I brought out shield and flail. Enthusiastic response! I have promised to make swords, daggers, polearms, etc, and give classes on same. Admittedly, I made another flail quickly and had great fun. The S.C.A. fighters had fun too even though I killed them all. After the demonstration of flail and shield, I was convinced -- yes, it's true -- to put on S.C.A. armor. I am not as sore as I imagined, but there is a nicely forming bone bruise on my hip.

*all my love,
Fygh*



The Building of a Great Society

Look around you at Amtgard. What do you see? From what you see, I challenge you to ask yourself, what is Amtgard? When you answer that, based on what you see, is it the same as if it were based on what you feel? If not, then there is some sort of strife, direct or indirect, in how we see Amtgard and how we feel it should be. When we ask how Amtgard should be, several things may come to mind.

Amtgard is a whole society. We are formed into a common union that it binds us to. In being a bound community, each individual is obligated to support it as a whole, for the whole. What good is it for individuals to isolate themselves by not contributing to Amtgard in a true devoted respect. They grasp for power and titles without filling the responsibilities that come with the power and titles. In order for Amtgard to become what we feel it should be, the first step is for all to contribute to the society in a creative, positive way of construction for the society's benefit and not the individual's glorification.

When one completes that creative construction, then he or she should be satisfied that they know they have contributed to the betterment of Amtgard. One should know that they have helped build a great society and have a feeling of self-accomplishment. This should be somewhat fullfilling, and even may be deserving of an award, but one should not expect an order or title. Hence, by this we tend to resent not being given something for doing our duty that

is contributing to the whole. Therefore, the second step to Amtgard's blooming is to be able to give to the society without having to receive something in return.

Thus, if each individual contributes and feels a sense of personal satisfaction, we should also feel an established kindred. We should attempt to be the society we want and not a pack of tribes isolated from each other. We should try to work out our problems rather than blame each other. Once a problem arises, we should consult each other and find a reasonable and efficient solution. The third and possibly most important step, is cooperation on everyone's part.

Finally, a sense of one's role within the society comes to being. We each should not only contribute, but once given a position, we should fulfill our role. Although, for example, a person may be qualified to be a knight, they may not be able to fill the role. A knight should be a "cut" above the rest in a sense of honor, fair play, and responsibility. Qualifying to be a knight means one has contributed enough to be considered for the position, but does not mean that the individual has the qualities of a knight. Consequently, a logical step in furthering our commonwealth is filling our roles.

These, of course, are not all that a society may require. A society is like a plant. With proper care, it will grow; without it, it will die. One may not ever realize the full spectrum of problems that may occur, but one may try to be well prepared. Within these guidelines Amtgard may run more smoothly and, thus, be better for the whole.