

Baronial Meet & Greet – Questions & Answers

Lady Curie Estelle & Lady Odette de la Rive

Why do you wish to be Baron/Baroness? (Odette)

- Innilgard has given us a lot in the time we've been here in terms of support, guidance and a place to grow.
- Now we find ourselves in a stable position with the ability to give back to the community.
- To us the baronial position is a position of service, we want to be able to give back what we've received by serving the barony as the barony has all of us.

What is your vision for the barony? (Curie)

- We've been here through the plague years; we've not only just survived but thrived in the years afterwards. We want to help carry that momentum forwards into the future.
- We would like to see more collaboration between the barony and the colleges in the interest of forming more connections between the members of the two.
- We would like the barony to look fabulous at festival and other more public facing events.
- We want to see more celebration and the centering of A&S activities within the barony.

What would you like to achieve in your time as B&B? (Curie)

- A greater presence for A&S within our borders.
- Forge stronger links between both our colleges and the barony.
- A push for more investment in infrastructure and presentation for the Innilgard campsite at festival.
- A push for a series of baronial A&S/Infrastructure projects (beautification project) with emphasis on establishing a shared goal for the barony and college members.

Do you plan any changes for the Barony? (Odette)

- Our focus is not to change, but to build on what we've already accomplished as a group.
- For most aspects, our only change would be to push to support the existing good that our members are doing in the aspects of the game we already do well.
- The biggest changes we would push are for more of a centering of A&S activities, better moderation and pacing of baronial activities/events and a greater focus on pageantry and representation within our events.

How long do you plan on being B&B? (Odette)

- Roughly 3-5 years, depending on requirements for step-down

Have you considered whether you will have a baronial household, what form it might take & what it might achieve? What Role will the Baronial Guards (Huscarls & Courtiers)? (Curie)

- We are considering a small, core, baronial household for organizational purposes.

- We would push to have at least a single representative of both the Huscarls & Courtiers at major court events as we would like them to have space for a more active role in court.
- We would work on a rolling roster, depending on availability of keen Heralds and attendants and encourage newer members to be paired with more experienced members to learn the process and roles.

How do you plan on recruiting members to the group? What are your thoughts on how to recruit new members to the group? What are your thoughts on ways to recruit new members to the group and encourage, nurture & mentor early participation? (Odette)

- Traditionally, the college has been the major entry point for many SCA members. The major hurdle with college recruitment is encouraging buy-in to the wider SCA from the collegians which I'd like to address in a later question. Most Collegians will be familiar with at least a small number of baronial members but might need additional support (hospitaller/Chatelain, directions to members with specific skills, etc.) to reduce the friction of moving into a baronial space.
- Our secondary influxes usually come from public facing demos- In the case where we want to target older potential community members and families, we would need to increase our presence in public facing events. Community members and families need a level of reassurance that the space is accommodating for them, particularly in the case of families with children.
- Lastly, one aspect we haven't explored much is the potential for cross-play between the members of other existing groups that have similar interests (LARP, HEMA, etc.). The more positive impressions we have in outreach, the more likely we are to have people come and see what we do. These potential members would need mostly guidance on the structures, rules and systems and getting onboarded for our email list/social media to coordinate attendance of events.

How do you plan to encourage existing members to continue playing with the group? What would you see as a means to encourage enthusiasm, continuing participation and retention of people in the group? How would you reach out to members who do not attend Sunday trainings? (Curie)

- On the topic of enthusiasm, we would like to maintain as much as possible but also moderate this with reasonable pacing to avoid member burnout.
- We want to push for more and diverse recognition of the existing members already doing good work.
- For the collegians, maintaining the links we currently have, supporting their journeys regardless of whether they end up integrating into the wider barony.
- With the expansion to increase A&S presence we may be looking to bolster existing A&S nights as an option for those who cannot attend Sundays as well as leaning into idea of supporting Sunday A&S for those who can.

What do you believe is the role of the B&B in regard to the College? How involved do you think they should be in the College? What do you see the role of the College to be in the Barony? There is a pattern whereby when the College has low numbers, it relies on the Barony for help, and those members tend to stay with the SCA after they finish Uni; when it has high numbers, the College tends to play independently of the Barony and those members tend to leave the SCA when they leave Uni. Do you think this is an issue, and if so, what do you think you can do to help break the pattern? (Odette)

- The B&B of Innigard are the B&B of the colleges of Blessed Herman & Saint Christina the Astonishing. We believe the Baronage should be active and make themselves known and available to the colleges in that capacity. However, in terms of culture and organization the colleges need to have a level of freedom to allow them to develop and grow independently.

- The colleges of Innilgard bring new members and a level of enthusiasm that we as longer-term members sometimes have forgotten. Additionally, many of our college and college adjacent members have filled several baronial officer roles.
- In terms of the issue of the colleges becoming insular during good times, I don't believe this is an unsolvable problem, but the root cause is the level of involvement of baronial members with the colleges and vice versa. The SCA is a place where you come for the reenactment and stay for the friends, the more investment an individual collegian has with their local barony, the more likely they are to continue playing there after they finish.
- If you establish rapport with any collegian, you increase their chances of wanting to explore the barony more. Once they establish connections to the other barony members, they are more likely to be present and more likely to recommend other collegians come along.
- Even if you have invested in a collegian and they leave, this is not a loss as they are more likely to later engage with other SCA groups & recommend the society to others if they have had a positive experience.

What do you see as some of the underlying issues with the difficulty in filling group Officer positions, and what would you do to encourage and support newer participants to take up key roles? (Curie)

- One of the major issues I have seen is that most people see taking on a role as detracting from their hobby time, and a lot of people accept roles begrudgingly. 9 times out of 10 the role is never as difficult or troublesome as people think. My belief is that we are already on the track to the office positions issue, looking at the last few years the majority of roles have been taken up by newer members, though a step to help this would be to make the roles more transparent and possibly trying to introduce multiple deputies in case of changes in plan.

How often and to what events (or types of events) do you plan to wayfare? What value do you see in the B&B attending interstate events? What are your views on importance (or not) of the B&B wayfaring to other groups or interstate events other than Festival or Crown events? How would you plan to achieve this? Do you plan on acting as advocates for members of your Barony when interstate; and if so, how do you plan on achieving this? (Odette)

- We are planning on having an established list of events (both large and small) from the beginning of each year that we are planning on attending (you will get notice).
- For larger events (Festival, Crown/Coronation, etc...) we will, within reason, have both of us attend.
- For smaller interstate events of various types and based on financial situations we would try to send one of us.

What do you think are the healthiest aspects of the Barony at present? What aspects of the Barony do you feel need to be worked on/improved? (Curie)

- Positives: We have a very strong martial culture in many aspects. Our service culture is ingrained in our very being.
- Negatives: We haven't had as much traction with social A&S activities as we have with the other aspects. We tend towards burnout in many situations and don't have many good strategies for combatting it.

Do you see a need for a support network for yourselves, and group as a whole, when travelling? If so, how do you hope to achieve this? (Odette)

- Having lived in several groups at this point, I have enough friends in various places to negotiate a network of support for both of us while travelling.

What will you do to encourage people to visit Innilgard (not just royalty or flying in Laurels & Knights)? How do you see the importance of attracting interstate and international visitors to our lands, and what plans would you have in encouraging this? (Odette)

- We would like to establish RRAV as our major royal event and do our best to encourage attendance for this.
- For Our other events, we have the issue of being geographically isolated, however making these events known in other baronies is the first step towards increasing interest.

How will you make yourselves available to members of the Barony wishing to discuss Baronial issues? (Curie)

- We're both always online and available by text/call. Curie is Constable and will be at practically every event. We're also available for members to organise meeting outside of standard SCA times to discuss matters in confidence.

The Barons/ Baronesses of a group are normally expected to lead and inspire their people. How do you plan to inspire the barony above and beyond the current status quo? (Odette)

- We want to be active and present within Innilgard.
- Both of us are already pushing within our own spheres of influence to help the barony and colleges and will continue to do so.
- We want our focus to be working towards helping Innilgard shine rather than increasing our own renown.
- Ultimately, the B&B need to do more than offer words, they need to be seen and acting towards the barony's best interests.

People by nature tend to change what they don't like, so what within SCA – Innilgard, game play don't you like? A baron and baroness lead by example in their group – what do you believe are your best virtues that you display to the group and what do you believe are your weakest? How do you plan to overcome your less virtuous behaviours so they don't negatively affect the group? (Curie)

- We want to see a more measured pace given to our progress and a reduction in SCA burnout in order to sustain enthusiasm and progress over the long term.
- (Curie) I would say my virtue is patience, I prefer to wait until I have a good understanding of a situation before acting, getting everyone's side or getting all the differing opinions if a choice needs to be made, Though like my consort this can lead to my less virtuous behaviours in that I'm not quick to act in certain situations, airing on the side of caution.
- (Odette) On the whole, the SCA gets to see a very different side of me in a more relaxed context than most people do. In terms of virtues, I would place determination above all my others. When I decide on a course of action, I will carry through with it. This also tends to cause my less admirable trait of having a bit of a one-track mind when completing a goal. I have been working to temper this and have been trying to be less single pointed when it comes to my work.

How do you see the B&B position with respect to leading the great variety of diverse and passionate people that are attracted to such a group as this, the SCA? What would you put in place, or how would you handle, situations that differ from the basic premises and goals of the society, group or individuals? (Odette)

- In all matters, the law takes precedence. If the goals of these members differ in ways that conflict with established law and SCA policies (corpora, SCA LTD and Lochac) then the matter must be handled accordingly.

- In the case where one or more members is pushing for changes to existing laws, these would need to be subject to review as we always do (alignment to changing social values, alignment with law, alignment with good faith)
- In the case of personal values and goals, the SCA is a society of individuals. Everyone is playing the game they want to play. We should maintain a level of flexibility to allow this to happen however this also needs to be tempered with the expectation that we cannot stray too far from the original intent of the society.

It is a common experience of the B&B for there to be different factions within your barony and many of your friends are often concentrated in one faction. If two factions in your group disagree and one faction has many of your friends in it, how can you ensure that you are seen as impartial and fair to all of the members of your Barony in helping them to resolve their dispute? (Odette)

- The B&B of Innigard are everyone's B&B. while you may have friend groups within specific factions, when you put on the hat, you need to be impartial and as objective as possible in your judgements.
- Ultimately, the B&B should not be encouraging factionalism in the first place and should be working towards mediation as their first option.
- In the case above, even if there is promise for impartiality from the B&B it can be hard for the other side to feel comfortable expressing themselves and they may be concerned that their arguments won't be heard. In these cases, we would seek to have a third-party mediator present besides ourselves for peace of mind for all parties.

If someone wants to run an event that practically needs to be small, or if an event has lower bookings around or below the break even, will you support that event going ahead? What sorts of things would contribute to your decision? (Curie)

- Our personal feeling is, yes, they should be allowed to proceed within reason.
- The more complex answer is that if there is interest, even from a smaller portion of the community, in a particular event/activity, we should be allowing the freedom for members to experiment with new ideas/events as this is how several of our events started.
- The things that may contribute is the level of interest from the small number of attendees, the total resource loss and the potential for expansion of the event (if run multiple times).

Are you familiar with Corpora and the Governing documents of Lochac? (Odette)

- Yes, I am reasonably familiar with the top-level documents and some of the lower-level policy documents.
- I have read corpora, there is a lot inside of that document.
- I am familiar with the order of legal precedence when considering application of laws and regulations.

Some see the ability to billet visiting royalty or other guests as an important part of the B&B role. How do you feel about this and do you think you can comfortably host guests of this nature? (Curie)

- We are now renting a much larger house than our previous rental apartment, we can (with notice) host several people if needed.

- The level of comfort will depend on the total number staying with us; however, we are very close to public transport, shopping and the city.

How will the nature of your jobs affect your activity in the SCA, for good or ill? (Curie)

- We are both casual workers, with enough notice for events we can both reliably book time off in advance.
- Odette is moving away from working Sundays to be more present at our regular trainings.