



THE RIVENVALE REVIEW



The Shire of Rivenvale's Quarterly Newsletter (Jul - Sep 2016)

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Serving Trumbull, Mahoning & Columbiana Counties in Ohio

Calendar of Shire Events

July 2016

- 5 - Business meeting and potluck. Dancing after meeting (time allowing).
- 12 - Persona Workshop & Archery
- 19 - Thrown Weapons & Sewing /Officer's Meeting after
- 26 - Dancing & Lucette

August 2016

- 3 - Pennsic - **NO MEETING.**
- 9 - Pennsic - **NO MEETING.**
- 16 - Quarterly Revel - Business meeting and potluck. Dancing and merriment! Garb & feast gear requested & encouraged
- 23 - Pennsic Show & Tell
- 30 - Archery & Period Outdoor games, SCA Traditions

September 2016

- 6 - Business meeting and potluck. Dancing after meeting (time allowing).
- 9 - 11 - **Saxon Summer XVI**
- 13 - Illumination & Who's Who in the SCA
- 20 - Sewing & Thrown Weapons
- 27 - Leatherworking & Herbs

If you are interested in a specific topic not listed, please contact one of the Shire Officers with suggestions. If you wish to lead a session please let us know.

(If you find that you do not wish to participate in the evenings' scheduled activities, feel free to bring whatever you are working on.)

For the latest and most current event & meeting information, you are invited to browse the Shire's website at: www.Rivenvale.org.

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Chronicler

Lady Áine ingen Uí Briain (*Julie Taylor*)
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Vacant Positions:

- Knight's Marshal (Heavy Combat)
 - Rapier Marshall
 - Youth Officer
- If interested, please contact our Seneschal

From the Chronicler

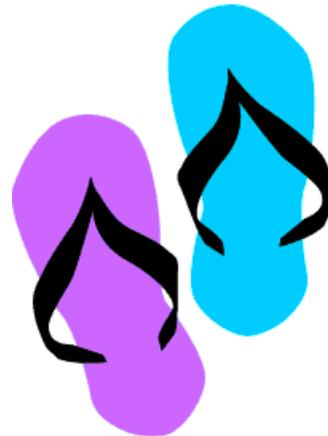
Greetings to Everyone:

Summertime is busy time! Household projects, activities and of course, PENNSIC!! Just to re-iterate, there will be no meetings the first two Tuesdays of August.

I am in the throes of the last minute Pennsic rush, like many others in the Shire. So little time, so much to do!!

In the midst of all of your summertime crazy, take a minute to RELAX and BREATHE. I say this as much for myself as anyone else. Deadlines will come regardless of ready or not, so don't let yourself get too crazy and remember that the journey is often what counts. Don't forget to get rest, use sunscreen and drink LOTS of water!

Yours in Service, Lady Áine



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Arts & Sciences

(The following information taken from the last quarterly A & S Report):

Demonstrations:

Midsummer Knights Medieval Fair - 2 day demo at the church where our shire meets. Demos included camp cooking, illumination, heraldry, medieval board games, wire jewelry making, period grooming products, and dancing.

Classes:

Sewing- making St. Birgitta caps. Approximately 8 participants.

Herbs- crafted an insect repellent based on a 14th century recipe. Approximately 6 participants.

Leather- staining & painting. 6 participants.

Leather- making a belt. Approximately 4 participants.

Dancing- teaching the basics of period dance styles. About 8 participants.

Individual projects:

THL Genevieve- Hand sewing- St Birgitta cap & linen veil

THL Rickard- Leather working (armor), lucet cord

Lady Katherine- embroidered cup covers, new gothic fitted (14th century) dress

Lady Jendriska- working on period poem with "juggling" theme

Lady Áine- scrollwork & illumination, embroidering celtic knotwork on tunic, sewing cloaks

Lady Beatrix- crafting new mead recipe, 12th century hair powder, hand sewing cap

Lettice- card woven band, spindling, hand sewing cap



Elderberry Mead

Ingredients

- 1 gallon water (filtered or spring)
- 2 lbs honey (approximately 3 cups)
- 2 cups fresh or frozen elderberries
- Small handful lemon balm
- 1 ½ tsp orange peel
- 1 ½ tsp bread yeast

Equipment:

- Measuring cups & spoons
- Pot & Lid
- Funnel
- Small piece of fabric and rubber band
- Bottles

Method:

Remove 4 cups of water from the gallon jug for another purpose. Pour an additional 3 cups of water and place in the pot. Add elderberries, lemon balm and orange peel to the pot. Cover and bring to a boil. Simmer, covered, for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, measure out honey and pour into remaining water in gallon jug. Shake vigorously to mix. When the flavoring tea in the pot has cooled slightly, pour into the jug, including as much of the solids as possible. Shake. Allow the mixture to cool to “baby bath water” temperature. Add yeast to the top, but do not mix. Discard lid and use rubber band to hold fabric over opening. This serves as a simple airlock. Allow the mead to ferment in a cool, dark place for several days. Begin to taste around the third day. When the mead reaches the flavor you prefer, strain it into clean, sterilized bottles. The mead can be fermented up to two weeks. The longer it ferments, the more honey will be converted to alcohol. Bottling early leads to a sweet flavor with lower alcohol content, while later bottling results in a drier mead with a higher percentage alcohol per volume. Refrigerate after bottling and consume within a few weeks. It is important to “burp” the mead every few days by opening the bottle and allowing the release of built up carbonation.

PENNSIC-THEMED WORD SEARCH

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

Archery
Artisans' Row
Bardic Circles
Battles
Beast and Boar
Bog
Campfire
Chocolate Milk
Classes
Court
Dancing
Drum Circles
Encampments
Fool's School

Heralds' Point
Meal Plan
Merchant's Row
Midnight Madness
Mystic Mail
O'Dark-Thirty
Packing List
Pennsic Independent
Performances
Privy Lids DOWN
Rapier
Runestone Hill
Serengeti
Shopping

Stay Hydrated
Thrown Weapons
Tiny Mugs
Troll
Vendors
War Points
Weed Walk

The Huva, aka "St. Birgitta's Cap"

Submitted by Lady Katherine Coscombe



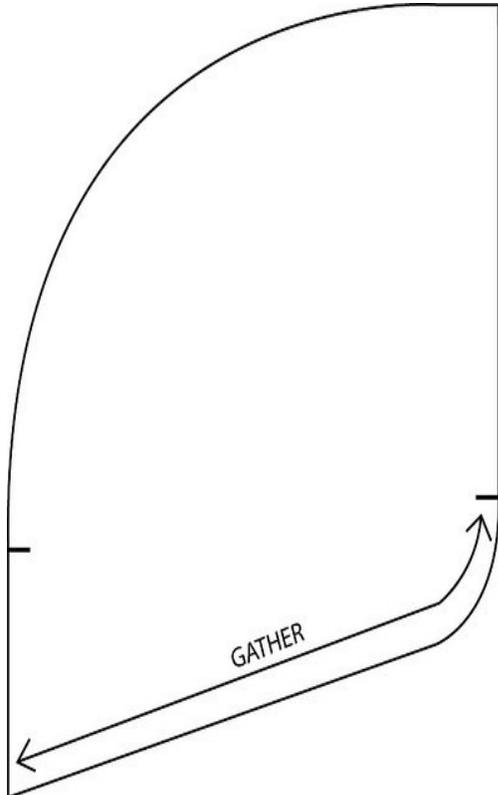
Birgitta's Caps in art – long, continuous strap, center back seam, and gathering at the nape. The extant example is linen with embroidery, but fancy work does not seem to be necessary for a historically accurate cap.

When creating the cap, you will need three basic pieces – two "bodies" and one strap. I typically cut my strap 2 inches wide. The length varies based on the size of your head, but a minimum of 4 ft is a good start. The "body" can be cut from a square, but I prefer a slight drop on the bottom edge – this allows a bit more room for hair.

The body should fit inside an approximately 10.5 x 12 inch rectangle. If you have a larger head, you might need to make it a bit bigger. The rounded corner in the front makes gathering a bit easier.

Join the two bodies along the top curve, leaving the last ~1.5" open.

Finish your seams, including the split. I usually roll my raw edges twice and fell them with a running or whip stitch. This can be done with a contrasting thread for a pretty accent.



Run gathering stitches along the bottom edge, and draw in to approximately 2".

You will probably need to piece your strap together to get enough length. Once it is pieced, you want to press the long edges in 1/2" on each side, so the raw edges meet in the middle.

Use the strap to bind the front and bottom edges of the cap. Test the length by wrapping it around your head to make sure it is the right size. (You could also leave it long & tie it, but the continuous loop is easy to wear & very period!)

I will typically close my strap with a ladder stitch where it hangs free, and use the similar slip stitch to finish it as it binds the body of the hat. You may also use a whip or blanket stitch for this task.

Resources:

<https://katafalk.wordpress.com/2014/01/16/st-birgittas-cap/>

<http://geekyyarn.blogspot.com/2013/11/cap-of-st-birgitta-tutorial.html>

Strawberrie Season

Contributed by THL Johnnae Ilyn Lewis, CE

My Lord of Ely, when I was last in Holborn,
I saw good strawberries in your garden there.
I do beseech you send for some of them.

Shakespeare.

The Tragedy of Richard the Third.

III, iv, lines 31-33.

Any one who pays attention to local farmer's markets and seasonal farm stand produce knows that the very special fresh Strawberry Season is almost upon us. Strawberries are one of those plants that are native to both the Old World and the New World. Wild strawberries ranged across ancient Europe, Asia, and North America. In the medieval period, the berries of the small native strawberry, (*Fragaria vesca*) of England, were gathered by hand from wild plants growing in the local woods and forests. The fruit might also be gathered from small beds established in kitchen gardens through the transplanting of entire plants. With better care, mulching, and fertilizer, these domesticated plants often flourished, and if the plants failed to thrive, housewives simply gathered more plants and replanted the beds. For several centuries various agricultural treatises would remind housewives September was the time for this activity:

Wife into thy garden, & set me a plot,
with strawbery rootes, of the best to be got.
Such growing abrode, among thornes in y^e wood
wel chosen & pyeked, proue excellent good.

Tusser, Thomas. ***Fiue hundreth points of good husbandry.*** London: 1573.

Besides the native wild strawberry, there were a number of varieties available for transplanting and experimentation in kitchen gardens. By the sixteenth century botanists were describing in detail and working with a white strawberry, (*F. sylvestris alba*), which was common to the mountains near Baden Switzerland and an everbearing strawberry, (*F. sylvestris semper-florens*), which flowered and fruited in the Alps throughout the growing season. This season often lasted from late spring into November. Also the Alps were the home of the wood strawberry (*F. silvestris*), which yielded small fruits with an intense taste; there was also a type called a musk strawberry (*F. moschata*), which was native to northern Europe and Siberia. Cultivation of it began in the sixteenth century. The work with these varieties was complicated by the fact that some of these varieties do not produce runners or adapt readily to domestication. Many also could not be crossed to produce hybrids.

The picture soon grew even more complicated. Soon after 1600, the Virginia strawberry (*F. virginiana*) of North America was imported into Europe. Descriptions of these Virginian berries growing wild include passages such as:

"...great fields and woods abounding with Strawberies much fairer and more sweete then ours, ..."

Hamor, Ralph. ***A true discourse of the present estate of Virginia and the successe of the affaires there till the 18 of Iune. 1614.*** published 1615.

This strawberry was crossed with native European berries with some measured success. Early in eighteenth century, newly arrived Chilean strawberry plants (*F. chiloensis*), native to the Pacific beaches of North and South America were introduced. These Chilean imports were then crossed with the Virginia strawberry (*F. virginiana*) which had been growing in Europe for the past century. This all New World American hybrid proved superior in flavor and size and was then adopted all over Europe. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries numerous improved strawberry cultivars were developed which offered even better disease resistance and were better adapted to various soil types and climatic conditions. Modern strawberries (*Fragaria X ananassa*) are the result of this work. (*continued*)

For those that would like to experiment with a combination of modern local berries and medieval or Elizabethan methods, here are some recipes:

Strawberye

Cxxij - Strawberye. Take Strawberys, and waysshe hem in tyme of there in gode red wyne; than strayne thorwe a clothe, and do hem in a potte with gode Almaunde mylke, a-lay it with Amyndoun other with the flowre of Rys, and make it chargeaunt and lat it boyle, and do ther-in Roysonys of coraunce, Safroun, Pepir, Sugre grete plente, poudere Gyngere, Canel, Galyngale; poynte it with Vynegre, and a lytil whyte grece put ther-to; colore it with Alkenade, and droppe it a-bowte, plante it with the graynys of Pome-garnad, and than serue it forth.

Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery-Books. Edited by Thomas Austin. (England, 1430)

To make a tarte of strawberyes

To make a tarte of strawberyes. Take and strayne them wyth the yolkes of foure egges, and a lyttle whyte breade grated, then season it up wyth suger and swete butter and so bake it.

A Proper Newe Booke of Cokerye. (England, mid-16th c.)

To make conserue of Strawberies, With the vertue of the same. chapter. xxx.

TAke Strawberies .i. quart clene picked and washed, set them on the fyre til they be soft, strain them put thereto two times as much suger in powder, as waight of the strawberies, let them seeth tyll the suger be incorporated w^t y^e straberis put it in a Glasse or earthen Pot well glazed.

The vertue of the same. The conserue of Strawberies is good against a hot liuer, or burning of the stomack, and specially in the seruent heate of an ague.

Thus [also] make conserue of Damasins and Prunes.

Partridge, John, fl. 1566-1573. *The Tresurie of Commodious Conceits, & Hidden Secrets.* 1573.

To make a Tarte of Stawberries.

VVash your strawberries, and put them into your Tarte, and season them with suger, synamom and ginger, and put in a litle red wine into them.

To make a Tarte of Strawberies.

TAke Strawberies and wash them in claret wine, thicke and temper them with rosewater, and season them with Sinamom, suger and ginger, and spread it on the Tart and endore the sides with butter, and cast on suger and biskets and serue them so.

Dawson, Thomas. *The Good Huswifes Iewell. [Jewel].* 1587.

Tarte of Strawberies.

Seson your Strawberyes with sugar, a very little Sinamon, a little ginger, and so cover them with a cover, and you must lay upon the cover a morsell of sweet Butter, Rosewater and Sugar, you may Ice the cover if you will, you must make your Ice with the white of an egge beaten, and Rosewater and Sugar.

A Book of Cookrye. (England, 1591)

A German recipe for a strawberry tart reads:

To make a strawberry tart

89 To make a strawberry tart. Make a pastry shell and let it become firm in the tart pan. Afterwards take strawberries and lay them around on top as close together as possible, after that sweeten them especially well. Next let it bake a short while, pour *Malavosia* over it and let it bake a while, then it is ready.

Das Kuchbuch der Sabina Welserin. (Germany, 16th century - V. Armstrong, trans.)

(continued)

A later 17th century recipe, which still includes the spices, reads:

To make a Tart of Strawberries.

Wash your Strawberries, and put them into your Tart, season them with Sugar, Cinnamon, Ginger, and a little red Wine, then close it, and bake it half an hour, ice it, scrape on Sugar, and serve it.

Kent, Elizabeth Grey, Countess of. *A Choice Manual of Rare and Select Secrets*. 1653

29. To make gelly ouf Straw-berries, Mulberies, Raspberries, or any such tender fruit.

Take your berries, and grinde them in an Alabaster Mortar, with foure ounces of Sugar, and a quarter pint of faire water, and as much Rose-water: and so boil it in a posnet with a little peece of Isinglasse, and so let it run through a fine cloth into your boxes, and so you may keepe it all the yeere.

Plat, Hugh. *Delightes for Ladies*. 1609.

One favorite method of eating strawberries today is to simply eat the fresh berries with cream or with sugar and cream. Thomas Dawson actually warns “beware of Cow cream and of Strawberries,” but other authors seem to endorse the practice. The combination is mentioned in various texts, including Thomas Hill’s famous gardening treatise where his advice reads:

The Berries in the Sommer tyme, eaten wyth Creame and Sugar, is accompted a greate refreshing to men, but more commended, beyng eaten wyth Wine and Sugar, for on suche wise, these maruellouslye coole and moisten Chollericke stomackes or suche beyng of a Cholericke complexion.

Hill, Thomas and Henry Dethick. *The Gardeners Labyrinth*. 1577

In poetry and art the strawberry was seen as that perfect fruit which could represent the Virgin. The flowers and red fruit represented both the blood of martyrdom and the white of purity. The three-fold leaves or trefoil of leaves represented the trinity. Of course the painter Hieronymus Bosch (1453?-1516) turned that imagery upside down. In his *The Garden of Earthly Delights*, Bosch depicts nude people of both sexes cavorting with giant strawberries.

In poetry, Spencer’s *Fairie Queene*, contains a passage that reflects upon gathering wild strawberries in the woods:

One day as they all three together went
To the greene wood, to gather strawberries,
There chaunst to them a dangerous accident;
Fairie Queene, book vi. canto x. stanza 34

Foodwise, Sir Philippe Sidney describes a milk-white horse as having scattered red marks “as when a few strawberries are scattered into a dish of creame.” [*The Countesse of Pembrokes Arcadia*, written by Sir Philippe Sidnei. 1590] Again it’s more support for the eating of strawberries with cream. Another poetic passage from the 1590’s also speaks of strawberries and cream:

Or wilt thou drinke a cup of new-made Wine
Froathing at top, mixt with a dish of Creame;
And Straw-berries, or Bil-berries in their prime,
Bath’d in a melting Sugar-Candie streame:
Barnfield, Richard. *The Affectionate Shepheard*. 1594.

(continued)

It seems fitting to end with this rather odd seventeenth century quotation on strawberries. The source is not any of the cookery books or herbals or even dietaries. It appears in the classic Izaak Walton work on angling. The text there reads:

"...we may say of angling, as Dr. Boteler said of strawberries, 'Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did!'"

The saying is attributed to Dr. Boteler and found in *The Compleat Angler* by Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton. 1655. 5th edition. 1676.

It can only be repeated that no better berry existed then or now.

Select Sources:

A Book of Cookrye. (England, 1591).

Collett-Sandars, W. "Strawberries." *The Gentleman's Magazine*. CCXLV. 1879: v. 23, pt. 2. pp. 109-123. [online at Google Books.]

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Fisher, Celia. *The Medieval Flower Book*. London: The British Library, 2007.

Das Kuchbuch der Sabina Welserin. Trans: V. Armstrong. (Germany, 16th century)

Plat, Hugh. *Delightes for Ladies*. 1609.

A Proper Newe Booke of Cokerye. (England, mid-16th c.)

Reich, Lee. "Strawberries." *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Food and Drink in America*. Ed. Gordon Campbell. Oxford University Press, 2003.

Spencer. *Fairie Queene*.

Two Fifteenth-Century Cookery-Books. Edited by Thomas Austin. (England, 1430).

Butler or Boteler saying attributed to Dr. Boteler and found in numerous editions of *The Compleat Angler* by Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton. 1655, including the 5th ed. 1676.

Hieronymus Bosch painting may be seen at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Garden_delights.jpg

Use was made of EEBO-TCP and Daniel Myers' Medieval Cookery website <www.medievalcookery.com> in the preparation of this article.

Numerous state universities provide information on strawberries:

Michigan State University maintains the MSUE Strawberry Information Center at:

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/news/michigan_strawberries and offers hundreds of articles at:

http://msue.anr.msu.edu/pages/search_results?query=strawberries

The University of Illinois maintains a similar site at: <http://urbanext.illinois.edu/strawberries/growing.html>

The Ohio State University is conducting research into better berries. See

<http://southcenters.osu.edu/horticulture/fruits/strawberries> and <http://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/HYG-5531>

Contributed by Johnnae Ilyn Lewis, CE

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