

Tisane



ti·sane ti-'zan, -'zän, n.
Etymology: Middle English, from Middle French, from Latin *ptisana*, from Greek *ptisanē*, literally, crushed barley, from *ptissein* to crush – Date: 14th century : an infusion (as of dried herbs) used as a beverage or for medicinal effects

To get on our mailing list, e-mail to newbrg@aol.com or drop an old-fashioned note to the return address on page four. Once our mailing list is set up, sample issues will be available for a stamp or S.A.S.E. (Yes, that is subject to change, too!)

If you are on line, join us on the sca-herbalist mailing list on onelist (go to www.egroups.com/subscribe/sca-herbalist to sign up).

Do you have a favorite herb, gardening tip, historical tidbit, or recipe? Maybe a book you think the world should share? That's perfect for this newsletter — send it to the Chronicler!



The quarterly newsletter of the Herbalists and Apothecaries' Guild of the East Kingdom

Volume I, Issue 2

June, 2000

Mission Statement: (proposed)

The goal of the Eastern Kingdom Herbalists and Apothecaries' Guild is to encourage study, teaching and practice of medieval herb uses, as well as study of medieval apothecary and pharmacy practice, in the East Kingdom. The Guild should serve as a conduit for herbalists and apothecaries in the kingdom to communicate with and learn from each other, and to disseminate knowledge about medieval herbalism and pharmacy to others.

From the Chronicler:

Although our first get-together may be the Herb Tea at Eisental's **Johannesnacht** (Lehighton, Pennsylvania, June 23), the first official meeting-to-form-a-Guild will be at Pennsic. Set aside an hour (from 3 to 4:00) on Friday, August 18 to meet, chat, and discuss a charter, mission, and other matters. If you won't be at Pennsic but want to be heard, send a note (in ink or electrons) to the addresses given elsewhere in this issue.

If all goes well, the charter and the associated petitions ought to be ready for signatures by September 16, which is the date of **A Walk in the Garden**, sponsored by the Shire of Silver Rylle (Lawn, Pennsylvania). This event looks to be chock-full of aromatic, healthful, and appetizing events.

Don't forget that there will be an herbalist presence at **Invitation to Amaral** (Delhi, New York, June 30-July 4) in the person of Baroness Rosalind Bennett, who is planning an herb garden there. (She welcomes help . . .)

Organizational matters — We have an Agitator (she chose her own title, folks!) and a Chronicler. We will eventually need other people to keep track of other efforts. Someone to keep a list of teachers and their specialized areas? Someone to serve as Guildmaster/mistress (or Secretary or Steward) and be the official public face of the Guild? Someone to design a badge? (Someone to make a banner with that badge on it?) Someone to organize seed and plant exchanges or sales? If we break it down into small enough pieces, none of the jobs will be too demanding. How about an archivist? An outside contact person? Someone to make reports to the Kingdom A&S Minister? If we decide on a ranking system, we'll need someone to keep track of it.

Herbs, Junior

Being the Chateleine Minor for the Shire of Montevale, EL4, I am always looking for new ideas to present to the children at our events. So I put a question to the list in March about what kind of herbs kids might be interested in learning about.

The response was immediate. The hardest part seemed to be narrowing the field down to 5 or 10 specific herbs. Madrun in Glædenfeld, Meridies, suggested chamomile, peppermint, basil, thyme, lemon balm (Melissa), and chocolate mint ("just 'cause it's cool").

Personally, I liked the idea of following the song, "Scarborough Fair" proposed by argente@aol.com (parsley, sage, rosemary, and thyme). Children seem to learn better when music accompanies the lesson. Other herbs mentioned include roses, geraniums, mints, and dandelions.

Important to keep in mind is ensuring that any herbs gathered are free from pesticides since, as Gillian of Mithlorin pointed out, kids of all ages can't resist taste-testing.

— Eriana O'Manley, Shire of Montevale

P.S. There are several articles on herbs in the classroom at http://kidsgardening.com/dig/digbrowse.taf?_start=1&type=art&cat=34

Sweet, Sweet Woodruff

Sweet Woodruff, *Galium Odoratum*, is far and away my favorite herb, and not only because in my yard (which ranges from "part shade" to "shade") it grows well, blooms freely, and smells good.

CULTURE. Sweet Woodruff makes a great flowering groundcover. The negative way of stating this is "it will take over if you let it." It roots easily from cuttings and by the third year you will find yourself ripping up great mats of it that have escaped your original planting. I've used it to choke out other plants just as vigorous but without woodruff's redeeming social qualities.

Sweet Woodruff's leaves have a vanilla scent. Its small white flowers appear in May and June, but the plant's aroma is noticeable even on a sunny winter day. It's a preferred napping spot for my cats.

USES. Take that mass of greenery, roots and all, that you have pulled up, and sort it into two brown paper bags. In one put all the greenery, close the bag with a clothespin (to keep out insects, dust, and the cats), and sit it somewhere undisturbed for a week or so. It will dry nicely and be ready to put into moth-repellent sachets, with or without the addition of wormwood, tansy, marigold, or mint. If you are a brewer, hold out some especially nice sprigs and use them in your May Wine. Clean the roots and you have dyestuff. There won't be much left for the compost heap.

As it is a natural insect repellent, you will want to spread bunches of the fresh or dry herb around your pavilion. Burning Sweet Woodruff is the same as setting off a bug bomb — it will kill insects but the toxins released won't be very good for people either.

MAY WINE. To new white wine, add sprigs of sweet woodruff (one spring to the bottle), let stand overnight. To serve, add sliced strawberries.

DYEING. Sweet Woodruff is related to madder, and it dyes red. (The leaves dye a tan, using the usual "soak, simmer, add alumed wool" technique.) The colorant is not as concentrated as madder, so it takes more roots and is harder to get deep tones. However, I've used it to make quite a nice light red. The madders work best if grown in a soil rich in lime and/or if hard water (containing lime) is used in the process. This recipe allows for that:

Soak 3½ oz of roots, chopped, for at least 24 hours. Stir in 1/6 oz ground chalk (you can use the kind that is sold for marking grass tennis courts and baseball diamonds). Heat to 120°, add a pound of alumed wool. Heat slowly to 176°, and hold at that temperature for an hour. Cool, soap, rinse, dry in shade.

— Johanna le Mercer, Shire of Coill Tuar

GUILD RANKING SYSTEMS



One of the things to be decided upon is the question of a ranking system for the Guild. So far it has been agreed that any ranking system adopted by the Guild would be strictly voluntary. It should not discriminate against those who aren't on line, can't have a garden, or anyone else. An outline of such a system was suggested in the last issue of *Tisane*. By way of comparison, here are ranking systems used by other Kingdom Herbal Guilds:

From the Herbal Guild of Meridies —

Novice: Any person showing an interest becomes a novice upon joining the Guild.

Craftsman: A person who demonstrates a working knowledge of the cultivation of herbs and their uses prior to 1600. A craftsman should be able to identify and show a knowledge of 15 herbs from three of the four categories below.

Expert: A person who is not only a craftsman, but is experienced and knowledgeable enough to teach herbal classes. An expert should have knowledge of at least 24 herbs, at least six from each of the four categories below.

Areas to be explored Culinary uses Cosmetics Medicinal Dyestuffs

Herbal products with recipes or papers on herbal works such as cultivation may be submitted. Members who have attained the level of Craftsman or above will panel members and recommend a rank. Members of the Order of the Laurel and the Companions of the velvet Owl will be invited to help panel until there are a sufficient number of guild members at Craftsman level to adequately panel submissions.

The An Tir Herbal Guild uses this one —

Apprenticeship: The designation of Apprentice within the Guild will be a relatively informal matter. The purpose of apprenticeship will be to help members become oriented to the differences between Medieval Herbalism and Modern Herbalism.

Journeyman: The completion of Apprenticeship should be recognized when at least two of the following are met:

A demonstration of Knowledge: This may be demonstrated through various means such as such as teaching a class on a any Herbal subject. This class could be at the local level, at Ithra, at an SCA workshop, or for the Guild specifically.

A demonstration of Service: The Rank of Journeyman may be reached through demonstrated service which benefits the Herbal Guild at the local or Kingdom level. This could involve many things, as one can imagine, but without service, we would not exist.

Recommendation for the Rank of Journeyman: Any member of the Herbal Guild may recommend another for recognition as a Journeyman of the Herbal Guild. Because of the Geographic diversity of the Guild, members in distant Branches May bring their achievements to the attention of the Guild Master for recommendation, or they may recommend themselves.

Master: The designation of Master within the Guild should stand as a recognition by the members of the guild for considerable service to the Guild, and for consistent efforts both to learn and to teach. Those recommended for the rank of Master within the Guild should be meet three of the following four criteria.

Recommendation for the Rank of Master: Any member of the Herbal Guild may recommend another for recognition as a Master within the Herbal Guild. Because of the Geographic diversity of the Guild, members in distant Branches may bring their achievements to the attention of the Guild Master for recommendation, or they may recommend themselves.

Demonstrated skill at teaching: At least three classes must be taught in a relatively formal context. These classes may be offered to a group or on an individual basis. They may be offered in any workshop, or arts & sciences venue supported by the SCA. Documentation for the following must be presented to the Guild: A copy of the attendance roster; a copy of the handout; a copy of the instructor's notes; and feedback from the students. The class must be substantive. That is to say, it can't be a book report. It can, however, be upon any subject touching upon the Herbal Arts. On a case by case basis, the presentation of published substantial articles may be accepted in lieu of portions of the teaching requirement.

Demonstration of Service: Those seeking, or recommended for, the rank of Master within the Herbal Guild of An Tir must be among those whose service as demonstrably benefited the Herbal Guild, or the Herbal Arts. This service can be the result of outstanding efforts to teach, or it may be demonstrated through outstanding efforts to support the other activities of the guild.

Demonstrated Peer-like qualities The qualities of Dependability, Courtesy, and Honor will be one additional mark of Masters within the Herbal Guild.

It's obvious that these frameworks can vary a great deal and range widely. Where do you think we should fall on the spectrum? Please share your thoughts — either communicate with *Tisane* directly (newbrg@aol.com or the address on mailer) or on the sca-herbalist listserv. (Discussion on the listserv will be picked up by this newsletter).

Bring your ideas to the Pennsic meeting, or relay them through someone who plans to be there.

Notes from the Agitator:

Well, the Guild seems to be growing and spreading as enthusiastically as the spreading thyme in my garden, despite wildly varying weather. I'm really impressed by how fast and how well things are coming together, and how much enthusiasm we're seeing from the members.

It looks as if we might be able to pull together a charter for the guild by the end of the Pennsic meeting and have copies to sign by the time of the Herbal Symposium in Silver Rylle (Sept. 16). At that rate, the Guild could present itself for Royal approval this year at Twelfth Night! Plans are already sprouting for another Herb event next spring, too. Wow!

But while the organizational work is getting resolved, we should also address the study and teaching aspect of the guild. In this issue you'll find a list of the herb-related classes I found in the Pennsic schedule; as you can see, there's room for a lot more. We're urging people to start teaching herb-related topics at events, writing herb articles for their local newsletter, having guild get-togethers in their local areas, etc. Together, this guild has an enormous store of knowledge about medieval herbalism and apothecary practice. We should be putting it all together – by teaching ourselves and others– in order to realize that vast potential. (End of sermon!)

There is a web page now up for the Guild, at: <http://tulgey.browser.net/~EKherb/>

If you have contributions or news to post, please let me know. We'd like to create a calendar of Guild-related events, and perhaps a list of links as well.

If you have any good ideas for the guild, suggestions, want to volunteer, or whatever, please contact me. Right now, I'm the contact person: Jadwiga Zajaczkowa, mka Jenne Heise jenne@tulgey.browser.net 610-432-2546

Here are some topics that have come up on the sca-herbalist listserv. For those not on the list, or those who have forgotten, here's a sampling:

On the sca_naturaldyes listserve, Lady Anneleise von Wolkenhaar offered "AnneLeise's Instant Gratification Dye Test"

1. save plastic containers from the Chinese restarant
2. throw random bits of wool, silk, cotton, etc., into the container
3. Add the herb you want to test as a dyestuff
4. Microwave

Lady Madrum awenydd an Glyndwr, the Chronicler of the Meridies Herbal Guild, has started a bibliography for us all. To contribute to this project, send the name of your favorite herb books, their authors, the ISBN number and a short review of each (optional) to awenyth@hotmail.com. She is looking for period cook-books and gardening sources as well.

Lady Jadwiga Zajaczkowa suggests that we consider holding "poster sessions" as is done at academic conferences — each exhibitor brings handouts, models, photos, objects, or whatever they want to display, and a time is set aside for spectators to talk to the exhibitors.

Related to the question of guild rankings there is the question of categories for competition. These have been suggested so far:

cooking/food
brewing/vinting
dyeing
gardening
period medical herbalism
comparative cultural herbology
scents



Baron William Montague de Vert suggests possible "field trips" to the Iron Hill Museum in Newark, Delaware (where he and his lady have begun a small medieval herb garden) and (at the other end of the spectrum) The Cloisters herb garden in New York City.

Anyone have additional suggestions?

HERALDRY FOR APOTHECARIES

In the last issue of *Tisane*, it was reported that only one device is registered to a Herbalists Guild — the Barony of Bjorneborg (San Antonio, Texas).

Theirs is:

*Or, within an annulet of
cloves sable a mortar
and pestle gules*

It has been brought to our attention that the An Tir Herbalists Guild also has such a device:

*Or, a mandrake plant
eradicated proper
within a bordure vert*

Anyone had any ideas yet for a device for the East Kingdom Herbalists and Apothecaries Guild?



Seeds Slips Cuttings

Plants grow from some small part of themselves into something usable. The same is true of our Guild. Here is another "small part" of those proposed Guild projects — a list of websites of interest to herbalists. Please add your own bits of information (by mail, listserv, or e-mail), and we'll share it, here and on *sca-herbalist*.

Websites

http://www.rainweaver.com/Herbal_Guild/ *An Tir Herbal Guild*

<http://www.florilegium.org/> *Stefan's Florilegium*

<http://www.egroups.com/community/SCA-Herbalist>
SCA-Herbalist Homepage

<http://www.herbnet.com/potpourri.htm> *HerbNET - Potpourri*

<http://www.med.virginia.edu/hs-library/historical/herb/menu.html>
Historical Collections - What is an Herb

<http://chili.rt66.com/hrbmoore/HOMEPAGE/HomePage.html>
Michael Moore - SW School of Botanical Medicine Home Page

<http://www.botanical.com/botanical/mgmh/mgmh.html>
A Modern Herbal Home Page

<http://tulgey.browser.net/~EKherb/tisane.html>
the Web home of this publication

http://www.egroups.com/group/SCA_NaturalDyes
homepage of the SCA_NaturalDyes listserv

http://warp.nal.usda.gov/afsic/AFSIC_pubs/srb9606.htm
*Herbs and Herb Gardening:
An Annotated Bibliography and Resource Guide*

Classes at Pennsic that might be of interest to Herbalists

Cross-Cultural Culinary Humours

Start With the Basics (Herbs)

Breaking the Fast

Making and Using Herbal Preparations

Weedwalk

Barber-Surgery in the Late Renaissance

Making Scented Oils and "Waters"

Henna, Healing and History

Shall We Boil? Techniques for Spicing Ales Without Hops

Medieval Garden Design

Scents of the Middle Ages

Tools and Techniques of Period Herbal Medicine

Herbs for Bittering Period English Ales

East Kingdom Herbalists' & Apothecaries' Guild

You too can brew: Cordials

Wed 8/9 1pm, Thurs 8/17 2pm

Thurs 8/10, 11am

Fri 8/11, 11 am

Sat 8/12, 4pm

Sat 8/12 10 am, Wed 8/16 10am

Sat 8/12 1pm, Fri 8/18 Noon

Sun 8/13 3 pm

Sun 8/13 3pm

Sun 8/13 Noon

Mon 8/14 Noon

Wed 8/16 11am

Wed 8/16 4pm

Thurs 8/17 7pm

Fri 8/18 3pm

Fri 8/18 5pm

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