



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

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***Mission Statement:***

The goal of the Eastern Kingdom Herbalist's 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.

**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](mailto:newbrg@aol.com) or drop an old-fashioned note to the return address on the mailer. Once our mailing list is set up, sample issues will be available for a stamp or SASE. (Yes, that is subject to change, too!)

If you are on line, join us on the sca-herbalist mailing list (go to [www.yahogroups.com/subscribe/sca-herbalist](http://www.yahogroups.com/subscribe/sca-herbalist) to sign up).

While you're on line, take a look at our website at

[www.eastkingdom.org/guilds/herb](http://www.eastkingdom.org/guilds/herb)

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!

## Greetings from the Agitator!

Well, the wet weather we're having doesn't seem to be dampening the spirits of the Herbalists and Apothecaries. Many people, including Brianna MacBain and the An Dubhaigeainn Herbalists Guild and whoever I rope into helping with the anti-chafe powder, have worked and will be working on tithes for the Queen to be distributed at Pennsic. Vivat for everyone who has contributed!

At Wars of the Roses, Brianna and I made presentation of part of the tithe to Her Majesty Roxane, who announced very graciously to the populace how much the Crown appreciates our work and how much the Guild contributes to the society. Our thanks to Her Gracious Majesty for her kind words!

Pennsic is coming up, and we will be wanting to spend the first hour of our Pennsic meeting discussing serious Guild issues like when to present the Winter reign tithes, how to handle rankings, and what other wonderful stuff we can come up with to put on the Guild webpage. But I promise we will spend the second half of the meeting in free form herbal discussion! If you have serious thoughts on the serious topics, please either share them on the e-mail lists or contact me privately.

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# Pennsic Classes

## Thursday, August 7

AS 6	Scentsational Koh	10-12
AS10	Easy Herbal Cosmetics	10-12
AS11	Mead Before Digby	9-10
AS8	Preparation of the Philosophers Stone	1-3
AS 11	Good Humors: A Taste of the Medieval Diet	Noon-1

## Friday, August 8

Barn	Weedwalk	10-11
AS6	An Elizabethan Lady's Home Medicine Chest	Noon-1

## Saturday August 9

Barn	Weedwalk	10-11
AS 5	Anglo-Saxon Leechcraft	Noon-1

## Sunday August 10

AS11	Scented Oils & Waters	4-6
AS 5	Scentsational Koh	10-Noon

## Monday August 11

AS11	Pease Pottage & Green Cheese	12-2
AS11	EKHAG Meeting	3-5
AS11	Unravelling the Knot: Elizabethan Gardens	2-3
AS9	Medieval Astrology	4-5

## Tuesday August 12

AS11	Making Medieval Mustards	1-2
AS11	Herbal Salve Making	4-5
AS8	Preparation of the Philosophers Stone	1-3
AS 3	The Plague and How to Avoid It	1-2 pm
AS 9	Poisons & Antidotes	4-5 pm

## Wednesday, August 13

AS11	Spices & Savory Seeds	12-1
AS12	Medieval Gardening	12-2
AS 11	Herbs Eat, Taste & Smell	1-3 pm

## Thursday August 14

AS3	Four 14th Century Mead Sources	3-4
AS6	Medieval Gardening	12-2
Private Camp	The Turkish Bath: Women's Beauty Treatments in the Hammam	3-6 pm

## Friday August 15

AS11	Making Medieval Mustards	1-2
AS11	You Too Can Brew	10-12
AS3	Women & Medicine in Period	11-1
AS6	Medieval Gardening	12-2

# HELPING YOUR WOUNDED WARRIOR

*Quida Aricia Jehane Deveraux, OP, OL, VC  
Guild Mistress of the Guild of St. Hildegard  
Principality of Cynagua, Kingdom of the West*



All cats are possessive, some more than others. These furry little warriors will fight off all interlopers and even some prowlers, who wander onto their territory. Unfortunately these confrontations, whether its a spit and hiss or a full-out battle, can lead to abscesses for both the victor and loser.

Mine comes to me and say he hurts, but if your cat seems overly lethargic, off his feed, and restless he may be suffering. Sometimes it is not easy to find the entry wound for the abscess. It can have a scab or just be a tender lump, warm to the touch. The lump is filled with some of the nastiest smelling, evil looking stuff you could imagine. And it is in unbelievable amounts! (The Black Plague comes to mind!) Frequently the abscess looks and smells much worse than it is and, once it's opened, usually drains, healing by itself. But for those cases where your noble fighter comes to you for assistance, the following procedures should help.

First locate the exact area of the abscess. If the area is not readily visible and you can't find the exact claw entrance site, make a compress of Plantain to make the pus come up the surface of the afflicted area. I use fairly hot water, because my cats handle that. I sit them on my lap and gently apply a hot herbal wash rag to the site. Sometimes I have even seen the Plantain compresses heal minor abscesses on their own. While the Plantain soaks in the skin, it starts the healing process itching so the cat will scratch the abscess open.

If you can easily locate the abscess proceed as follows:

I usually start with opening up the abscess and draining it. Sometimes just applying a little pressure to the area (lightly massage with your fingers ... kitties won't like it at all) will make the abscess open, otherwise using warm water to remove the scab will open the wound. You can use any type of clean cloth for this, soaked with a mild solution of 80% warm water to 20% hydrogen peroxide. Using that same peroxide solution gently clean the open abscess. Then if stitches are not required, just maintain a clean wound as it heals.

I do this by cleaning it twice daily with an infusion of lavender /thyme or thyme/rosemary, using eight drops of the essential oil each to one cup of hot water (or two tablespoons of dried herb, or one tablespoon of fresh herb to one cup of hot water). Let this steep for approximately 10 to 15 minutes, cooling as it steeps. Then you can apply it to the afflicted area by either using a cloth, *i.e.*: cotton or linen (don't use cotton balls, these frequently get into or catch pieces in the wound) as a compress, then flush out the wound using an eyedropper of the herbal solution.

This requires you wrap the kitty, if he/she is not friendly, in a towel and have someone hold them. (Mine just either sits in the bathroom sink/counter or my lap because he has decided that he preferred me to the awful trips to the Torture Room, multiple stitches and drains and of course the humiliating, embarrassing Elizabethan collars! Those are the worst. He also sits by while I work on the other cats — I guess he is telling them of the horrid alternatives or giving moral support!) If you have a very adventurous kitty who can get violent while being treated, I suggest you save yourself some injuries of your own and get something called "Res-



cue Remedy." It is an herbal relaxant, sorta "Kitty Valium." I have slipped it to some of the wildest kitties and been able to work on them, scratch/bite free. It's terrific and most health food stores/herb shops carry it. It also can help your cat rest after a traumatic experience or surgery.

Keep the area clean repeating the clean/flushing for up to four days max. That is all it takes to set things in motion. Make sure that your little warrior is eating and drinking and that the wound does not close too soon. If it does, you will need to reopen it to ensure everything drains completely.

**IMPORTANT:** Do not use Yarrow or Comfrey when cleaning the abscess. They are very good, but as in humans, these herbs may cause the top surface of the wound to close too fast, disrupting the drainage of the infectious materials, trapping them inside the wound.

Also don't bandage the wound — it only serves to trap dirt and infectious matter and does not let the cat help out by keeping it clean himself. And he will probably rip it off right away anyway.

If for some reason your abscess is not draining, your cat is not eating or drinking or the abscess is *very* large and hot to the touch, get them to the Vet. They will be beyond your help, as the infection has gotten out of control.

Good luck with your furry veteran and remember cats are incredibly resilient! They frequently can finish healing themselves, once you have given them a little push towards the road to recovery.



## A Pennsic Project for the Guild!

Under the coordination of Lady Arastorm, EKHAG plans to concoct a batch of "Most Precious Ointment" at Pennsic.

A MOST PRECIOUS OINTMENT FOR ALL MANNER OF ACHES AND BRUISES: AND ALSO FOR THE REDNESS OF THE FACE

Take Violet, Primrose, Elder, Cowslip, leaves and flowers; Sage, Mugwort, Ragweed, white Lillies, St. Johnswort, Rose-leaves, Rue, Fetherfew, Tansie, Lovage, Mint, Camomile, Thyme, Dill, Clary, Oak of Jerusalem, Penyroial, Hysop, Balm, White Mint, Marygold, Peony-leaves, Bay-leaves, Saffron, each one handful. Stamp all these in a Stone-mortar, as you get them then put them in a Pottle of Sallet Oyl, and so let them infuse there till you have all the rest together; for you cannot get them all at one time, but get them as fast as you can. Then put to them and the Oyl a quart of White Wine, and set it over the fire, and boyl it to the Consumption of the Wine; then take it off and strain it; then put it into a glass and keep it for use. when you anoint any sore with this do it by the fire side, chafing it well in; and then lay a Hog's-bladder next to it, and a Linnen upon that."

*Receipts in Physick & Chirurgery* by Kenelm Digby, 1668

# TANSY: for or against?

Tansy was one of the plants dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

Tansy was used, in the fourteenth century, as a remedy for wounds, and as a bitter tonic, and Tansy Tea has an old reputation in country districts for fever and other illnesses.

Tansy was used as an accompaniment to roast lamb, the way we now use mint.

Tansy was one of the Strewing Herbs mentioned by *Tusser* in 1577.

*Culpepper*: "Of Tansie. The root eaten, is a singular remedy for the gout: the rich may bestow the cost to preserve it."

*Gerard*: cakes were made of the young leaves in the spring, mixed with eggs, "which be pleasant in taste and good for the stomache; for if bad humours cleave thereunder, it doth perfectly concoct them and carry them off. The roote, preserved in honie, or sugar, is an especiall thing against the gout, if everie day for a certaine space, a reasonable quantitie thereof be eaten fasting."

*Dodoens*: The name Tansy is probably derived from the Greek *Athanaton* (immortal), either because it lasts so long in flower or, as Ambrosius thought, because it is capital for preserving dead bodies from corruption. It was said to have been given to Ganymede to make him immortal.

*Parkinson* grew Tansy amongst other aromatic and culinary herbs in his garden.

Cows and sheep eat Tansy, but horses, goats and hogs refuse to touch it, and flies will not attack meat rubbed with this plant. In Sussex, at one time, Tansy leaves had the reputation of curing ague, if placed in the shoes. It gives a green dye. It is still included in insect-repelling herbal mixtures and, in some cases, used to protect kitchen cupboards from ants.

## That's all the good stuff.

Tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*, not to be confused with tansy ragwort, *Senecio jacobaea*) is classified as a noxious weed in some areas. Because of its thujone content, it is no longer recommended for worms, hysteria, kidney weaknesses, flatulence, or gout, all of which it was used to combat as recently as the publication of the *Modern Herbal* of Mrs. Grieve. The *Herbal PDR* is careful to point out, however, that nearly all cases of toxic effects have involved the use of the essential oil, and that external applications (in salves or infusions for treating rashes or sprains) incur a very low level of risk.

One of the most interesting uses of Tansy historically was in the spring delicacy also called "a Tansy." Sometimes called "Tansy Cakes," Tansies seem to have been very similar to herbed scrambled eggs and were often an Easter dish. One tradition was that "even archbishops and bishops played handball with men of their congregation, and a Tansy cake was the reward of the victors."

*Coles* (1656) says the origin of eating [tansies] in the spring is because Tansy is very wholesome after the salt fish consumed during Lent, and counteracts the ill-effects which the "moist and cold constitution of winter has made on people . . . though many understand it not, and some simple people take it for a matter of superstition to do so."

"This balsamic plant," says Boerhaave (quoted by Mrs. Grieve), "will supply the place of nutmegs and cinnamon," and the young leaves, shredded, serve as a flavouring for puddings and omelets.



As someone said in the (on-line) sca-herbalist discussion of tansy, you may feel that you could try it yourself, but not feel comfortable offering it to anyone else! Whether to try, or just for the information's sake, here are some period Tansy recipes, courtesy of Lady Tchepakkan.

*"How to make a Tansy in Lent.- Take all maner of hearbes and the spawn of a Pike or of any other fish and blanched almond and a few crums of bread and a little faire water and a pinte of Rose-water and mingle altogether and make it not too thin and frie it in oyl and so serve it in".*

— *The Good Housewife's Handmaid*, 1588.

Apparently using fish eggs instead of chicken eggs makes this a Lenten dish.

*"How to make a Tansy — Take a little tansy, feather-few, parsley and violets, and stampe them altogether and straine them with the yolkes of eight or tenne eggs, and three or foure whites, and some vinegar and put thereto sugar or salt and frie it."*

— *Ibid*

*To make a plain Tansy- Take a fine stale penny loaf and cut the crum in thin shaves; put it in a bowl, then boil a munchkin of cream, and when boiled pour it over the bread, then cover the bowl with a plate and let it lie a quarter of an hour; then mix it with eight eggs well beaten, two gills of the juice of spinage, two spoonfuls of the juice of Tansy and sweeten it with sugar, nutmeg and a little brandy: rub your pan with butter and put it in; then keep it stirring on the fire until it is pretty thick; then put it in a buttered dish, you may either bake it, or do it in the dripping pan under the roasted meat.*

— *The Receipt book of Elizabeth Cleland*, 1759."

*To make an Apple Tansy — Pare your apples, cut them in thin round Slices, fry them in Sweet butter; then beat a half a score of eggs with a quart of cream, the juice of spinage and Tansy of each a quarter of a pint, and a little Rose-water; when thease are all beaten together pour them on your apples. — The Receipt Book of John Nott 1723"*

*A Good Tansy- Take seven eggs and leaving out two whites, and a pint of Cream some Tansy, Thyme, sweet marjoram, Parsley, Strawberry leaves all, shred very small a little nutmeg, add a plate of grated white Bread, let these be mixed all together, then fry them but not too brown".*

— *Ibid*

### **Notable herbal entries in various Kingdom A&S contests:**

#### ***In King's and Queen's Arts & Sciences Championships:***

Agriculture and Animal Husbandry	Lady Brianna McBain for A Medieval Garden
Apothecary	Tie between Lady Brianna McBain for Tallow-based soaps and herbal salves and Gavan McBane for Apple Cinnamon Cordial
Cooking	subtlety/sweets      Lady Prudence the Curious for Spice in Confit
Cooking other	Mistress Murshidah bint Safiyya al Andulus for Rose Products (Rose water, rose syrup, and rose jam-- YUM!)

#### ***At Northern Lights Pentathlon:***

Herbalism	Sonia de el Bosque	Comfits
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## Greetings from the Agitator!

*Continued from page one*

Lots of scheduled activities coming up, at Landsknecht, at Something Fishy, at Pennsic, St. Elegius and EKU in Montevale in September. Please join us if you can.

Demeter's Return Spring Faire and demo was a great success, thanks to everyone who turned out for it. We are still looking to have a Guild event this year, please talk to your local groups about the possibility of sponsoring it!

Now's the time to start thinking about projects to make from your gardens and also to take pictures if you want to put together a garden poster session. The Agriculture category at Kings and Queen's Champions of Arts contests featured two wonderful garden presentations from Lady Brianna and Lady Brynn. Start putting together notes and pictures on your garden to share with us! Remember, you all need to start considering entering A&S competitions and displays so we have something to look at!

Last but not least, I want to say thank you to all of you, members and friends of the Guild. You, together, have brought this guild into being. Your efforts and enthusiasm make it happen, and I feel privileged to be involved with this process and to know you all.

In love and in service,  
Pani Jadwiga Zajackowa, Agitatrix



## And from the Chronicler

### **Postage Matters**

The *Tisane* mailing list has grown some more. Unfortunately, this coincides with the end of the postage funds raised at Herbal Symposium last fall — stamps are our main expense. You might want to consider a small herbal fund-raiser or a donation of stamps.

### ***The Historical Herbalist***

There has been some small progress on this introductory publication; so far we have a bibliography, an article on the history of herbal medicine, and promises of several other articles on dying, wildcrafting, and such. If you would like to contribute a short article written for new members (it may also appear in *Tisane*, of course) please get in touch with the Chronicler.

In the meantime, feel free to make copies of this issue and pass them around at Pennsic, or at a local event.

Lady Johanna le Mercer, Chronicler