

**The quarterly newsletter of the
Herbalists and Apothecaries' Guild
of the East Kingdom
Volume 8, Issue 1
Spring, 2007**

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

HEADLINES

**The Artifice of Beauty (Book Review)
Is There A Piss-a-Bed in Your Lawn?
Pots, Jars, and Other Containers**

Mission Statement:

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 Agitatrix:

Greetings!

It's now been six years since the East Kingdom Herbalists' & Apothecaries' Guild received our Royal Charter for the first time, from Andreas I and Isabella I. We've done a lot in the intervening time. But now, as the Agitatrix, I begin to wonder if we need to refocus and reenergize the guild. To that end, I'd like to get some feedback from you all about this group and its purpose. If you are, like me, the sort of person who is best and doing things online, I've got a survey you can fill out on the web:

<http://users.drew.edu/~jheise/herbguildsurvey.html>

If you'd rather not fill out a survey, then I'd appreciate it if you'd contact me either in person or via mail (1114 W. Lincoln St., Easton PA 18042), email (jenne.heise@gmail.com), or phone (610)509-8087 to talk about the following stuff:

How do our current methods of communicating (*Ti-sane*, ekherbs list, SCA-herbalist list postings, website,

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To get on our mailing list, e-mail to joanne@jafath.com or drop an old-fashioned note to the return address on the mailer.

If you are on line, join us on the [sca-herbalist](http://www.sca-herbalist.com) mailing list (go to www.yahoo.com/groups subscribe/[sca-herbalist](http://www.sca-herbalist.com) to sign up) or the East-specific EK-Herb (sign up from our website at www.eastkingdom.org/guilds/herb).

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

The Artifice of Beauty

Sally Pointer.

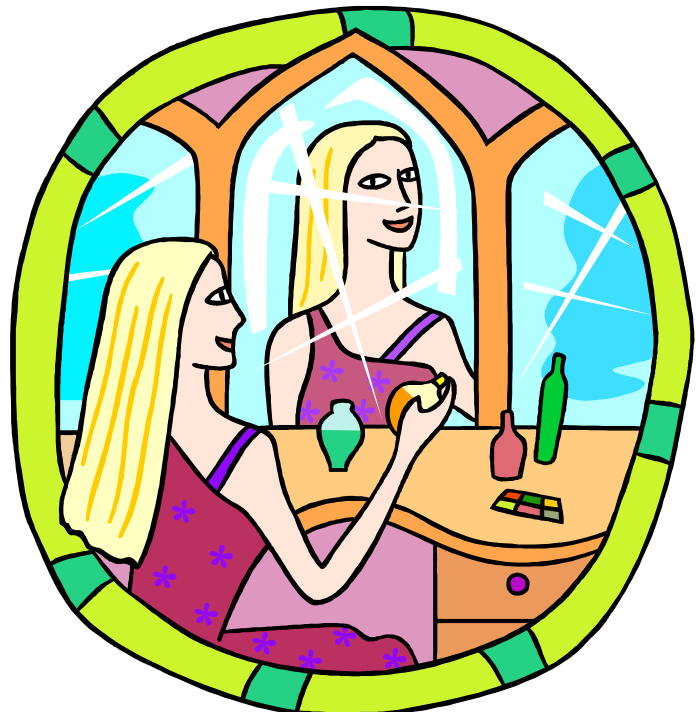
The Artifice of Beauty: A History and Practical Guide to Perfumes and Cosmetics.
Sutton Publishing, 2005.

While there are many books out on cosmetics, perfumes, and the history of adornment, there has been a dearth of well-researched, modern historical and archaeological studies with practical information. Sally Pointer, from the National Museum and Gallery of Wales, has written a text that fills that gap admirably. The depth and accuracy of the research, and the scholarly discussion, in *The Artifice of Beauty*, is combined with the re-creation experiences of a skilled museum curator. Anyone interested in researching and/or recreating fashion, material culture, or personal life in history should have this book in her or his library. Those interested in dabbling in homemade cosmetics and perfumes will also find it very useful.

Pointer first lays out "The Nature of the Evidence" in her introduction, then tackles the various ages of humankind in nine chronological chapters. While none is completely exhaustive-- the beauty regimens of the nineteenth century alone have filled multiple shelves of books-- each chapter provides a good groundwork for understanding cosmetics, perfumes, and ideas of beauty in the period. Her strongest suit is in the early evidence, Ancient World and Classical world sections, but those areas have previously been the subject of much archaeology but little reliable summary. Her information about the medieval through the seventeenth centuries is a treasure trove of facts and quotations.

Of special interest is Pointer's analyses of possible make-up trends based on pictorial representations of people in the period. Were pink cheeks admired? Highly accented eyes? What color of hair was in fashion. Information about hairpieces and false hair, washes, soap and other cosmetic preparations are also included. Sidebars cover specific items that Pointer herself has researched and recreated, such as a nail stain made from alkanet root, Roman wigs, Mesopotamian eye paints, alcohol-based Hungary Water, seventeenth century 'invisible rouge,' 18th century Carmelite water. Illustrations of advertisements highlight the later chapters. The text here is interesting as well as erudite, and Pointer carefully delineates her deductions and suppositions so that the reader can tell what is documented fact and what scholarly reasoning. Throughout, attention is paid to the safety of the ingredients discussed, and the possible and documented health effects on their users. Some facts-- such as a strange fashion in the nineteenth century for nipple-piercing and a selection of medieval mouthwashes-- will surprise the reader. Others, such as the utility of pomade for the hair, that the skin-destroying properties of ceruse (white lead) were known to the historic critics of 'painting', or that bathing and washing were done with some regularity in pre-modern periods, may explode some cherished myths.

After the text history, Pointer lays out "A Guide to Recreating Perfumes and Cosmetics, with Selected Recipes Adapted for Modern Use." The second section of the



book is of interest not only to historians and re-enactors but to chemists, in that it consists of a glossary of cosmetic and perfume ingredients. While not exhaustive, especially with reference to more modern ingredients, this guide will be invaluable to those curious about Behen oil, Kohl, the elusive Nard, pomades, stacte, terebinth resin, etc. Here, also, are included a number of excellent recreated or redacted recipes. The next section covers Tools, Implements and Cosmetic Containers, with special attention to the pre-modern period.

One cannot overemphasize the importance of chapter 12, on Adapting Early Recipes to Modern Usage, for the recreator, re-enactor, or cosmetics student or dabbler. In this section Pointer lays out two historical recipes, one classical and one Victorian, and shows how she worked out safe, modern recipes for the items described. (For SCA purposes, these two recipes would be excellent guides for creating competitive documentation.) The painstaking work here, and the careful explanation of what changes and compromises the author felt necessary, are outstanding. This is supplemented by a table of Modern Cosmetic Pigments to assist the recreator, a listing of Weights and Measures, as well as an Appendix listing ingredients mentioned by Classical Authors (compare to Forbes' *Studies in Ancient Technology* volume 3) and "Abdeker's Library of the Toilet, 1754." The index, notes and bibliography are easy to read and useful.

I highly recommend this text for personal and library collections. Libraries with an interest in personal care, women's history, cosmetic chemistry, fashion, pre-modern culture, hobby herbalism, and historic costume and medieval culture will find this an especially helpful introduction.

—Jadwiga Zajackowa



Are There Piss-A-Beds In Your Lawn?



Dandelion, *Taraxacum officinale*

Piss-a-bed, Priest's Crown, Swine's Snout, Blowball, Cankerwort, Lion's Tooth, Wild Endive

This is wel known to have many long and deeply gashed Leavs lying on the ground, round about the Head of the Root; the ends of each Gash or Jag on both sides looking downwards towards the Root, the middle rib being white which broken yieldeth abundance of bitter Milk, but the Root much more: from among the Leavs which alwaies abide green, arise many slender, weak, naked Footstalks, every one of them bearing at the top one large yellow Flower, consisting of many rows of yellow Leavs, broad at the points and nicked in with a deep spot of yellow in the middle, which growing ripe, the green Husk wherin the Flower stood turneth it self down to the Stalk, and the Head of down becometh as round as a Ball, with long reddish Seed underneath, bearing a part of the Down on the Head of every one, which together is blown away with the Wind, or may be at once blown away with ones Mouth. The Root growth downwards exceeding deep, which being broken off within the ground, wil notwithstanding shoot forth again; and wil hardly be destroyed where it hath once taken deep Root in the ground.

—Culpeper's Herbal

Culpeper obviously knew the dandelion well. When he adds that *It wonderfully openeth the Passages of the Urin both in yong and old.*

He has pretty much summed up the situation. Mrs. Grieve takes many more words to say much the same thing; on the other hand, she quotes the *Ortus Santitatis* of 1485 and Brunfels' *Contrafayt Kreuterbuch* of 1532 to back it up.

Culpeper recommends a decoction of either roots or leaves in wine, but Mrs. Grieve goes on to recommend enjoying spring salads of the leaves or making sandwiches ("the tender leaves being laid between slices of bread and butter and sprinkled with salt").

There is also, of course, Dandelion Wine.

This is made by pouring a gallon of boiling water over a gallon of the flowers. After being well stirred, it is covered with a blanket and allowed to stand for three days, being stirred again at intervals, after which it is strained and the liquor boiled for 30 minutes, with the addition of 3 1/2 lb. of loaf sugar, a little ginger sliced, the rind of 1 orange and 1 lemon sliced. When cold, a little yeast is placed in it on a piece of toast, producing fermentation. It is then covered over and allowed to stand two days until it has ceased 'working,' when it is placed in a cask, well bunged down for two months before bottling. This wine is suggestive of sherry slightly flat, and has the deserved reputation of being an excellent tonic, extremely good for the blood.

And Dandelion Coffee:

The roasted roots are largely used to form Dandelion Coffee, being first thoroughly cleaned, then dried by artificial heat, and slightly roasted till they are the tint of coffee, when they are ground ready for use. The roots are taken up in the autumn, being then most fitted for this purpose. The prepared powder is said to be almost indistinguishable from real coffee, and is claimed to be an improvement to inferior coffee, which is often an adulterated product.

The *Herbal PDR* dates dandelion medicinal uses to the 10th century, and lists it as a remedy for appetite loss, indigestion, kidney and bladder stones, liver and gallbladder problems, and urinary tract infections. The only warnings are to avoid it in case of gallbladder problems, and that it has been known to cause heartburn.

Here's a more modern Dandelion Wine recipe:

1 package dried yeast
¼ C warm water
2 quarts dandelion blossoms
4 quarts water
1 C orange juice
3 T fresh lemon juice
3 T fresh lime juice
8 whole cloves
½ t powdered ginger
3 T coarsely chopped orange peel
1 T coarsely chopped lemon peel
6 C sugar

Dissolve the yeast in the water, set aside. Wash the dandelion blossoms well, put them in the water with the orange, lemon, and lime juice. Add the cloves, ginger, orange and lemon peel, and sugar. Bring to a boil and continue to boil for an hour. Strain through filter paper and cool.

While still warm (but not hot) stir in the yeast.

Let stand overnight and pour into bottles. Allow uncorked bottles to set in a darkened place for three weeks, then cork and store bottles in a cool place. Makes about four quarts.

SOURCES

<http://info.med.yale.edu/library/historical/culpeper/culpeper.htm> (Culpeper on Line)

www.botanical.com (*A Modern Herbal*)

<http://nccam.nih.gov> (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)

www.pdrhealth.com (PDR health website)

www.texascookingonline.com (Texas Cooking On Line)



POTS, JARS, AND OTHER CONTAINERS

*"I am very glad," said Pook happily,
"that I thought of giving you a Useful Pot to put things in."*

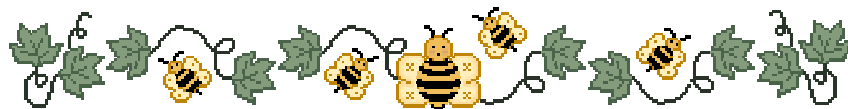
Speaking of Pots, where do you get your supplies? We're not talking here about plants, organic matter, or essential oils. We're talking about jars, bottles, boxes, droppers, and containers in general. After all, you have to put those wonderful concoctions into *something*. You may need just one fancy bottle for the scented oil in the Queen's Tithe basket, or you may be a merchant and need a gross of ointment containers for your famous handcream.

Recent suggestions on the sca-herbalist listserv included:

- **"Look on ebay"**. A little experimentation leads us to add, limit your search to "empty," "glass," "small," or the like — you can use a lot of limiters in a single search. Use a hyphen before a search term to eliminate things like "–scotch" or "–milk" if they turn up in unwanted numbers.
- **"Post a 'wanted' message on your local Freecycle list."** (Go to www.freecycle.org to find a link to your local group. Read the directions.)
- **"Try my favorite supplier"**: for instance —
 - ❖ www.the-sage.com. The prices are great, but the containers are mostly plastic, hard or soft. As with most of these suppliers, you must order the lids separately. There's a \$75 minimum order.
 - ❖ www.sks-bottle.com. They've got glass as well as plastic, and the prices are still good, but the minimum quantities can be quite large — 250 jars to the case instead of 24, for instance.
 - ❖ www.specialtybottle.com. No minimum order, pretty good prices, and a wide range of offerings, including aluminum bottles!
 - ❖ www.burchbottles.com. You can't order on line from them yet, but they offer a really nice color catalog.
 - ❖ www.ebottles.com. Nice website and a vast array of products. But the prices are noticeably higher, at least on a spot check.
 - ❖ Googling on "bottles" can lead to some interesting places — or try "jars." The latter led, among other places, to www.coloredbottles.com. Lovely (and rather pricey) stuff!



What's YOUR favorite solution to the problem?



From the Agitatrix

Continued from page 1

meetings) work for you?

What would you like to see the guild do more of: Classes, Meetings, Events, publications on web/in print, a group reading list or herbal, online discussions, group activities, or something else?

What, if anything, would you be able to do to help with the guild? Even coming to meetings and participating in discussions is a help!

Thank you for your thoughts and feedback,

Jadwiga Zajackowa



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