

Seasons

#12 Winter A.S. LVIV
(2024)





Greetings from the Seasons Editor

Greetings to All!

This is the 12th issue of the new SEASONS. Three years in, and we hope you are enjoying the format and content of this magazine. We welcome Original Cover and Filler Art;

Instructional/Educational Articles; Original Poetry and Songs; Photos of A&S Entries, Tourney Winners, and Vigils; and Information on Future Elevations (all with permission to reprint).

We hope to continue celebrating, in this magazine, the talents, achievements and merits of our Meridian subjects, and showcasing their creations, and we invite you to join our readership and to be a part of our efforts.

In continuing Service...
Meistres Bronwen o Gydweli
Seasons Editor



Upcoming Events This Season

According to the Kingdom Calendar at the time of this publication, the following Events and Virtual Gatherings will be held (in the stated formats) during the Winter of A.S. LIX (2024-2025):

- **Magna Faire** (Live) — December 6th-8th (Iron Mountain)
- **Winter Market** (Live) - December 14th (Glaedenfeld)
- **Twelfth Night and Stella Rubra** (Live) — January 4th (Bryn Madoc)
- **PANHANDLE SKIRMISHES** (Live)—January 10th-12th (Trimaris)
- **Menhir** (Live) -January 18th (Rising Stone)
- **Fighters Collegium/War College** (Live) — January 24th-26th — (Phoenix Rising) Etowah County Fairgrounds , Atalla, AL
- **Midwinter Arts & Sciences** (Live) - February 1st (South Downs)
- **Jour d'Amour** (Live) - February 14th-16th (Drakenmere)
- **Knights Gambit** (Live) - February 14th-16th (Thorngill)
- **Meridian Challenge of Arms** (Live) - February 21st-23rd (???)
- **GULF WARS** (Live) - March 8th-16th (Gleann Abhann)

TUESDAY NIGHT SOCIALS continue to be held and hosted by Mistress Ellen de Lacey on ZOOM at 7:00pm CST/8:00pm EST. These also feature Classes, Guild Meetings, Pennon Decision Meetings, and Heraldry After Hours.

FRIDAY NIGHT BARDIC continues to be hosted on ZOOM at 9:30pm EST, and they have also posted a rather extensive calendar of Bardic Activities and Classes — to be seen at the Friday Night Bardic group on Facebook.

HERALDRY AFTER HOURS on-line Herald's Point is hosted by Lord Magnus von Lubeck every Tuesday at 8:00pm CST/9:00pm EST in conjunction with the ZOOM Social.



Autumn Event Highlights

During the Summer of A.S. LIX the eventing stepped up, and the following Meridian Events were hosted and enjoyed:

- **Daggers & Hemlock: Death & Taxes** (Phoenix Glade) September 20th -22nd—This event was held in Chipley, FL but unfortunately the event flyer did not include information on the name of the site (other than the address), or on what activities were being held (other than a feast), or on the accommodations for overnight stays on site, if any. We have been told, however, that there were both Heavy and Rapier Fighting held, and that those who attended had a very good time.
- **Haustblot II** (Loch an Fhraoich) September 21st—This one-day event was held at the Pulaski Rec Center in Pulaski, TN, and promised Fighting, Feasting and Classes, as well as “Sir Hrothgar’s Taco Bar”. From all reports, much fun was had!
- **Red Tower 50—October 3rd-6th (South Downs)** This was a four-day event, celebrating the 50th anniversary of Red Tower. As a result, The Barony of the South Downs pretty much pulled out all of the stops and offered all sorts of activities and entertainments. Held at Little Tallapoosa Park in Carrollton, GA, this historic anniversary event was well-attended and was reportedly a lot of activities including Armored & Rapier Tournaments, Ranged Weapons, Equestrian, Arts & Sciences Competition and Salons, two Feasts, and much more — though we saw no mention on the flyer of a Feast. Many, many photos were posted on line by folks who managed to be there, and clearly a great time was had by those who attended. Happy 50th, South Downs!!!
- **Bacon Bash X: Spamalot—October 4th-6th (Crimson River)** This year’s Bacon Bash was a weekend event held at Montgomery Bell State Park in Burns, TN, and featured BACON, and maybe SPAM. We’ve had no actual reports, and the flyer mentioned nothing about activities other than a Feast, but we’re pretty sure fighting of some sort was involved and this event is usually reported to be a lot of fun.
- **FALL CORONATION—October 12th (1-Day) (Glynn Rhe/An Dun Theine)** We don’t know how many locals (if any) managed to attend this Kingdom Level Event, since it was held as a one-day event hosted five-hours away at the Wolf Gap Educational Outreach in Pulaski, TN, but the event saw the glorious reign of TRMs **Sebastianos and Morgan** end with the final flight? Of Hades and Persephone, who needed to return home immediately to stop Aphrodite from redecorating everything in pinks and rainbows and sunshine (just Awful, and Chaos and Panic apparently did nothing to prevent the pastel-ation of Hades realm by Aphrodite), followed by the assumption of the Equine Thrones by Their Majesties **Barthelemy and Oda**. Meridies has a new Crown, and we wish Them a long and healthy reign!!

- **Gatalop 40th—October 25th-27th (Osprey)** As always, this traditional fighting event was held at historic Fort Gaines on Dauphin Island near Mobile, AL, and thanks to the setting featured a lot of unique fighting scenarios and camping and revelry in and around the wonderful historic fort. An Athanor A&S Faire was held, the first ever Baronial Rapier Champion was chosen as **THLord Marquette Hildebrand von Amsterdam**, and the Barony of the Osprey was awarded The Crown's Favor by **THMs Barthelemy and Oda**, as was **Fort Gaines** itself. Great event, as usual, with two extra sets of Crowns in attendance: Trimaris and Gleann Abhann.
- **Silver Hammer—October 25th-27th (Thor's Mountain)** This event was hosted as a weekend event at Big Ridge State Park in Maynardville, TN, and the theme was Viking exploration of the New World. The Thor's Mountaineers offered a feast, on-site accommodations, and also promised Tournaments and Revelry. Reports are that this was an excellent event, as usual.
- **Newcomers Collegium: Not Just for Newcomers Anymore —November 3rd (Owl's Nest)** Hosted at Red Top Mountain State Park, Group Shelter 2 in Cartersville, GA, this event promised Tournaments, Feast, Classes for Newcomers, Feast Training, How to Serve in the SCA, Youth Classes, Dancing, Singing and Storytelling. A very nice event, and well-run!!
- **FALL CROWN LIST—November 9th (Glaedenfeld/Easaraigh)** Co-hosted as a one-day event at the White County Fairgrounds in Sparta, TN., and this event, of course, centered around the glorious tournament to select to next Meridian Heirs. On 01 November Their Royal Majesties Barthelemy and Oda graciously posted a list of the Crown Lyst participants (numbering fourteen in all), to wit:

Combatants in Crown Tourney were:

Syr Conrad vom Schwarzwald and Baroness Genevieve Alaiz d'Avignon

Baroness Mairghread Wilson and Baron Piers Simmons

Lord Brenton Rennel and The Honorable Lady Rose Rennel

Earl Lochlainn Glen Noe and Hrafynya Paraskova Chemislava

Count Randver Brotamaðr and Countess Arianne Lighthouse of Whiteheld

Sir Emhin Mactir and Countess Gwenhwyfar Mwynn

Sir Isaac Rous and The Honorable Lady Alina De Lacy

Lord Arthur Von Eschenbach and Dame Karis Pursey

The Honorable Lord Xenos Theodrikes and Lady Etain of the Ulaid

Baron Eirikr Palsson and Baroness Lady Arnora Karlsdottir

al-Faris Idris ibn Tariq al-Maghribi and Baroness Rondlynn Seren

Sir Chinua Qadanjin and Lady Jacqueline Storme

Sir John Mailer and Ọmọkẹhìndẹgbẹ̀bọ̀n Ọyọ̀ called Kẹ̀hìndé

Sir Conal MacDale and Mistress Wuennemon did Naehrin

Following a well-fought and chivalrous Tourney, the final four were Earl

Lochlainn, Sir Conal, Sir Chinua, and Sir Emhinn but in the end the new

Crown Prince and Princess of the Kingdom of Meridies were named as **TRHs**



Lochlainn and Paraskova, and the Meridian lineage was thus assured!! Ad Astra!!

- **Castle Wars: The Ancient Olympic Games —November 21st-24th (South Downs)**

As usual, this was a 4-day event, and was held at Burt Adams Boy Scout Camp in Covington, GA,, and was a four-day event featuring lots of rousing battles and other martial activities and contests, plus merchants, classes, and revelry — and a few shenanigans (including a Satyr Sighting), — and thanks to good weather the event was a rousing success.

Fall Events Still On The December Calendar

(or held after Deadline)

- **Magna Faire—December 6th-8th (Iron Mountain)**

This annual weekend A&S Event was to be held at Camp Meadowbrook in Cullman AL Both the Magna Faire and an A&S Regional Competition were planned, and also Classes were promised. Rapier and Heavy Fighters were encourage to take part in the Toys for Tots Tourney, and in the Sword & Mistletoe Tourney, and in the Iron Mountain Baronial Rapier Tourney, and guests were promised a sumptuous German Feast.

- **Winter Market—December 14th (Glaedenfeld)**

Merchants and others were invited to a day of celebrating the Arts at this one-day event, held at the White County Fairgrounds in Sparta, TN. Featuring “An Artisan’s Life”, attendees were invited to view the works created and demonstrated by fellow SCAdian artisans from a day in the life of their persona, as well as to enjoy shopping the Market, Fighting, Equestrian Activities, and a Feast.

A Scribal Challenge from the Kingdom Chronicler

Baroness Ana de Granada

I am working with Parchment and with the Scribal Guild and will be sponsoring a category in the Illumination Challenge. There will be four categories:

Category 1) Frames to enhance the letters from Their Majesties and Their Highnesses

Category 2) Easter Eggs or Items like ornate dividing lines which split articles from each other:

Category 3) Rondels: fitting in a 2 1/2 inches wide by 2 1/2 inches tall box

Category 4) Front Cover: I hope this will help with our struggle with these needs.

Finally, I am currently training my replacement. Alis Talemache will be taking over as Kingdom Chronicler sometime in March.

Ana



Guilding the Lily?

So what are the Meridian Guilds, and what are those Guilds doing these days?

The Kingdom of Meridies presently has a number of active Guilds, including the: Scribal Guild, Courtesans Guild, Saltare (Dance Guild), Arachne's Web (Lace Guild), Gaming Guild, Iron Bow Guild, Painters Guild, Herbal Guild, Grand Chefs Guild, Minstrels Guild, Coursing Guild (Greyhounds), Equestrian Guild, and Foresters Guild — and possibly others.

Arachne's Web—Lace Guild

<http://facebook.com/groups/434953093257836/>

Coursing Guild

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/23606595926266/>

Courtesans Guild of Meridies

<https://courtesansofmeridies.wordpress.com/>

The Meridian Embroidery Guild

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/414381975319839>

Gaming Guild

https://www.facebook.com/groups/889784304857628/?ref=share_group_link

Grand Chefs of Meridies

<https://grandchefs.meridies.org/>

Herbal Guild of Meridies

<https://sites.google.com/site/scameridianherbalists/>

Ironbow Guild

<https://ironbow.meridies.org/>

Historic Martial Arts Guild

<https://hma.meridies.org/>

Meridian Moneyers

<https://m.facebook.com/groups/MeridianMoneyers/>

Minstrels Guild

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/meridianminstrelsguild>

Painters' Guild of Meridies

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/918601828202930/>

Royal Foresters of Meridies

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MeridiesForesters/>

Saltare—Meridian Dance Guild

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/414381975319839>

Scribal Guild of Meridies

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/382341241966024/>



*Tradesmen Window
Chartres Cathedral 13th Century*

The Meridian Herbal Guild has recently been meeting fairly regularly on Tuesday nights in conjunction with the Tuesday Night Socials on Zoom, so if you have an interest in herbs, their cultivation and their uses, you might consider checking in on some of these and meeting some of the other members.

We will gladly mention meeting schedules for other guilds here also, on request!

Winter in the Kitchen:

Looking Into Ancient Grains, Part One

By Mistress Christiana MacGrain



We have all heard phrases "The Staff of Life" and "Man cannot live by bread alone", but what significance to grains really have in our lives? In medieval Europe, wheat, barley, oats and rye were common cereal grains. Rice was known and imported from warmer areas in the Mediterranean, Middle East, Asia and Africa. In the New World, early Native American farmers were developing corn into the major cereal crop that it is today. Ancient Grains that developed as staples in their various areas of origin are still grown and enjoyed around the world. From an ecological perspective, much of the world's soil is not well-suited to wheat, and traditional, sustainable farming practices were adapted to grains that grew best and offered the highest nutrition for varied areas and conditions.

The earliest cultivated wheats were far different from the modern hybrid wheat grown today. Every kernel upon the stalk of ancient wheat matured thickly wrapped in heavy, protective cloak-like husks. Science calls these earliest cultivated wheats "covered" or "husked". Free-threshing wheats with huskless, naked kernels arose later as offspring from these rustic, covered wheats. One of these ancient wheats is Spelt Wheat, or *Triticum Spelta*. Spelt became the Staff of Life for early Europe, where the Anglo Saxons named the grain giving it roots in their language of Old English. With the age of mechanical milling machines, however, spelt was used less and less, considered old-fashioned, and out-of-date with its long straw and thick, heavy husks, combined with lower yields compared to wheats beginning to thrive from modernized plant breeding programs. A few farms high up in the Alps where the only places where spelt production continued.

Wheat is the world's most important carbohydrate crop and nourishes more people than any other food source. According to scientists, spelt wheat is parent and ancestor to the modernized bread wheat plants we have today. Spelt wheat was a famous baking wheat with an outstanding reputation for making the best breads with deep aroma, hearty flavor, and a nutty taste. The kernel components that allow wheat to be made into a dough that rises and produces light, fluffy baked goods are called "gluten proteins". Bread wheat is so-called because it is rich in gluten proteins. Modern bread wheat received its gluten proteins from its spelt wheat parentage. Old folk varieties of wheat like Spelt are great storage reservoirs of innumerable protein variations. Spelt yields a higher protein and fiber content than common wheat, and the gluten is highly water-soluble. When baking with spelt, keep in mind that it does not absorb quite as much liquid as regular wheat, so either lower your liquid volume or add additional spelt to absorb the same amount of liquid (about 25% more). For general cooking information, 1 cup of spelt berries cooked in 3-4 cups of water for 40 minutes will yield roughly 2 cups of cooked grain.

Spelt is often used in medieval recipes such as these:

Farro di Spelta

<https://medievalcookery.com/search/display.html?anoni:137:SPLT>

Spelt and Basil Polenta

<http://www.godecookery.com/friends/frec19.htm>

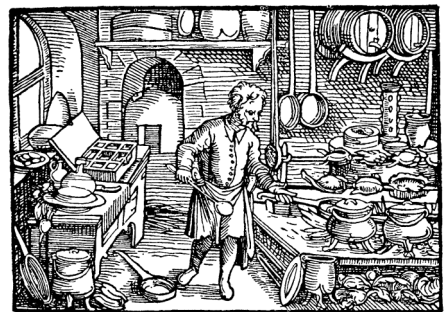
But what about other grains, not related to wheat? For these, we look to the longest mountain chain in the world, the *Cordillera de los Andes*. One of the most ancient crops domesticated in the Americas is grown there, called Quinoa (pronounced *keen-wah*). The botanical name of this crop is *Chenopodium Quinoa*. Quinoa means "*the mother*" in the language of the Quechua Indians, one of two primary Andean languages of the South American high plains. Among all the races of grain chenopods, the best known and most abundantly grown is quinoa. On the Andean altiplano of Peru and Bolivia, above 10,000 feet elevation, quinoa is the queen of the edible seed crops. Grown for centuries in the mountain valleys and on the lofty semi-arid Andean plateau, the crop has served as a high-altitude staple for countless generations of Aymara and Quechua Andeans; descendants of the Inca empire. To the Andeans, quinoa has been an energy resource supporting vigorous work in the thin air and constant foot travel, often across long distances, with a nutritional profile and centuries-long record of providing energy and sustaining life at high altitudes.

Quinoa grain contains an excellent balance of amino acids and high protein levels. Quinoa is fast-cooking and easy to prepare. It has a delightful density and texture, neither sticky or heavy, but light and fluffy. Throughout the Andean altiplano it is prepared whole like rice, or hand-milled into flour for home-baked biscuits and Andean flatbreads.

Quinoa seeds are flat, round, and small, with a disc-like shape. Traveling around the outside edge of the disc is a circular hoop, like the band on a barrel. When whole quinoa grains are cooked, the soft inside melts and the circular hoop separates off. These tiny, curved crescents are sprinkled throughout each spoonful, each one resembling a tiny letter "C" and adding a crunchy texture amidst the surrounding melted grains. Freshly harvested from the plant, each quinoa seed is thickly coated with a glossy varnish of dry, bitter, soap-like substances called saponins. These natural soap compounds protect the seed from predation by birds and insects. Most of these bitter saponins have been removed from the grain before it is sold, but some traces always remain. Fortunately, these quinoa seedcoat saponins are easily dissolved in cold water rinses, usually 4-5 rinses or until the sudsy froth stops forming when fresh water is run over the uncooked grain.

Quinoa will expand more than the usual 2 - 1 ratio of more common grains. When cooking, use about 2 cups of water to one cup of quinoa, cook for 15-20 minutes, and this will yield 3 - 4 cups of grain.

An ancient Andean method of cooking quinoa is to gather smooth river stones and heat them in a fire. Wash the quinoa in several waters to remove the bitter saponins. Place the hot stones in a clay pot with pre-soaked quinoa. Add aromatic herbs and a small amount of water. Cover and let the residual heat from the stones cook the quinoa.

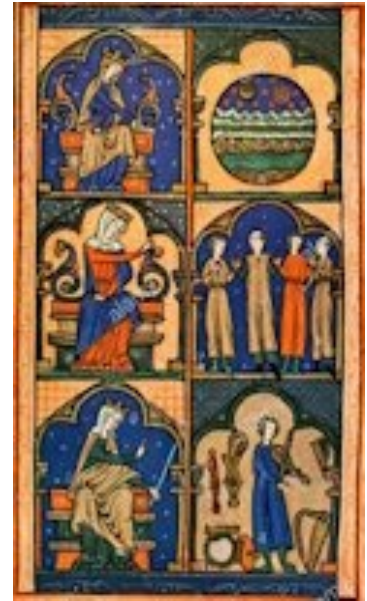


Meet the Fall Champions

Champions for this issue include

- **THLord Marquette Hildebrand von Amsterdam**, the new Baronial Rapier Champion of the Barony of the Osprey.
- Inducted into the Order of the Scarlet Star in A.S. LIX were: **Baron Bram Haldannarson** on 26 May at Kingdom A&S Fair and Spring Crown List, **Baroness Adalyde de Sardaigne** on 20 July at RUM, and **Baroness Ana de Granada** on 31 August at Vices and Virtues.
- Inducted into the Order of the Bough at Red Tower on 05 October were: **THLord Erland Caldwell**, **THLady Raven Helmsplitter**, **THLady Grainne mhic Neill**, **THLord Yamamoto Shingen**, **Baroness Juliana of Empingham**, and **Lady Eibhlin Nic Domnial**.
- Inducted into the order of the Velvet Owl at Red Tower on 05 October were: **THL Min Soo Yun**, **Lord Gaius Nautius Maximus**, and **Baron Asbrand of Norway**.
- Inducted into the Order of the Bough at Fall Coronation on 12 October were **Mistress Adrianna Stothard**, and **THLady Evangeline Bajolet**.
- Inducted into the Order of the Bough at Gatalop on 26 October were: **THLord Hronarr Jarnhauss** and **Mistress Ínan bint Sufian**.
- Inducted into the Meridian Order of the Blade at Gatalop on 26 October was: **Lord Fearghal O’Raithbheartaigh**.
- Inducted into the Order of the Bough on 09 November at Fall Crown Lyst were: **THLord Tristram Jager von Bonn**, **Lady Phillipa Delaney**, **Baroness Katheryn Spencer**, **The Oloye Omokehindegbebon Ayoka Opo**, and **Baroness Ana de Granada**.
- Inducted unto the Orders of Great Merit at Castle Wars on 23 November were: Bear: **THLady Song Qingzhao** and **Brennen Rennel**, Bough: **Baron Éamonn Mac Uilliam**, **Lord Salim al Khalil**, **THLord Nathri MacConall**, and **THLady Katarzyna of Saulia**.
- Also declared at Castle Wars were: **Master Fynlo MacCane** - King's Huntsman, **Baron Seric of Marston** - King's Lancer, and **Maegan of Owl's Nest** - Queen's Yeoman

Congratulations to all!!



ZOOM in the SCA

Ellen DeLacey, OP Meridies

Technology has always impacted the way we communicate in the SCA. In 2020 technology gained ground in a huge new way through Zoom and led to what some have called a Renaissance period of the Arts & Sciences for us. By the end of 2020 we were using Zoom for online universities with up to 1000 in attendance. It was also instrumental for broadcasting royal courts to Facebook and to YouTube. We were flourishing through some of the toughest times experienced by our organization. The virtual option is contributing to a lasting knowledge base unlike anything previously seen in our many years. From the comfort of our pajamas and on-demand coffee it is now easier than ever to share our knowledge with people across the world. What a great way to spend your time with others, even if you are only working on your A&S projects.

Just a few of the SCA activities still happening on Zoom

- **Virtual Known World Herald and Scribes**, annual winter edition. This has two days or more of scribal and heraldry tracks in January.
- **University of Atlantia** has three regular online offerings annually. January brings two days of university offering 70-100 classes. June shines with one day of virtual university on Sunday. September welcomes the fall with a Sunday online collegium.
- **Known World Chatelaines and Newcomers Collegiums** are new offerings in the virtual realm that started in late 2023. The initial chatelaine online event met with great success and the current plan is for this to alternate annually between chatelaine and newcomer themed events.
- **Solar University of Northshield (SUN)** takes a different format in November by hosting online classes in the evenings of the week before their in-person university.
- **Drachenwald University** in January allows us to share our passion with people across the globe in the same class spaces.
- **Friday Night Bardic** is still weekly. Join and listen while muted since performing is optional. This is now past the 4 year mark and sometimes offers activities on more than just Fridays.
- **Sunday Night With the Scribes**, also over 4 years old, is a weekly space with scribal classes and provides opportunities to show and share your work, ask questions, or receive feedback if desired. Teachers and classes are always welcome.

From single classes to large impromptu collegiums, there are many more events to find. They all bring us the possibility for new knowledge, friendships, and connections.

How to find online activities?

Many virtual activities are posted in Facebook groups such as the private “**SCA Virtual Classroom and Artisan Display**.” Ask inside your kingdom and local groups if anyone is hosting virtual activities. Arts & Sciences Facebook groups are a good place to look as well.



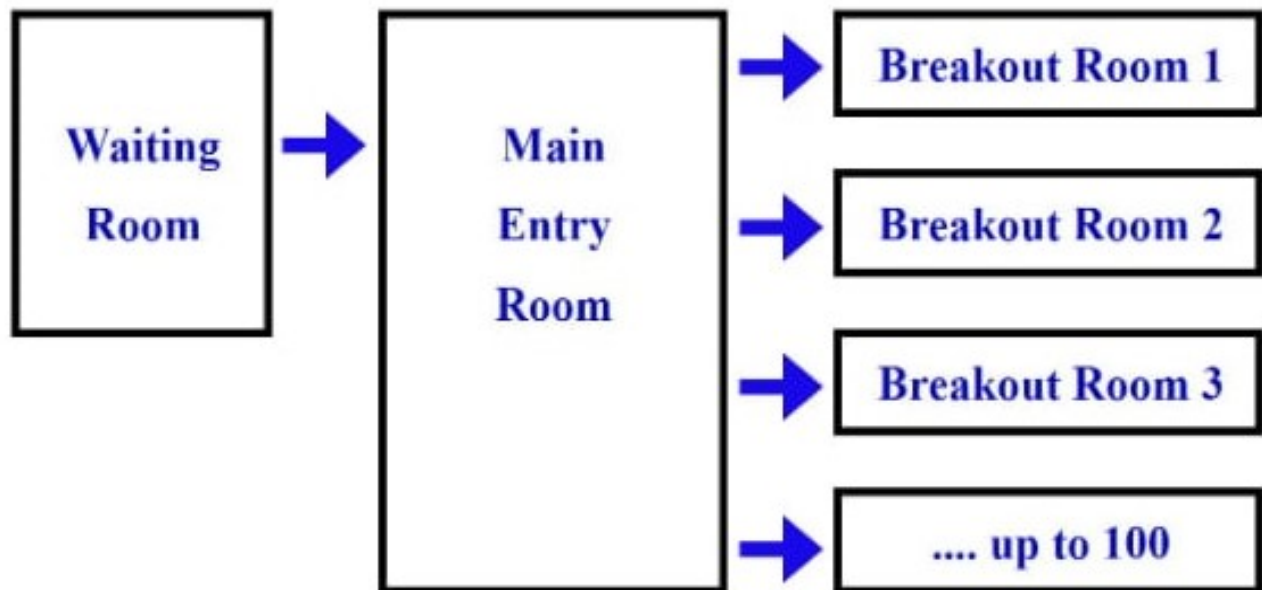
Did you miss an online event? Are you looking for a class on a specific topic?

All of these activities have given rise to hundreds of published YouTube videos. Two of the most prolific channels are the Kingdom of Atenveldt and the Royal University of the Midrealm. Between them they boast over three hundred classes or sessions on a variety of topics.

Accessibility

Zoom as a venue, shared with new old friends, reopens doors for those who may be challenged in the areas of mobility, finances, location, and transportation. Many who thought that their SCA days were behind them are elated to reconnect to the community they have loved for so long. In an active Zoom some accessibility features include audible activity cues, screen reader support, and closed captioning. The participant has control over font size for captioning and chat. Anyone can have a free account and host meetings up to 40 minutes long. Anyone with the paid accounts can host meetings for many hours non-stop.

Basic Zoom layout: waiting rooms, main room, and breakout rooms.



It may help you to envision this as a house. The waiting room is the porch and you're waiting for somebody to let you in. Let's call the space that you enter after the waiting room the generic main room of the house. The entire session can happen just in this space without ever going into the breakout rooms. However, there are many zooms that use the breakout room feature. Breakout rooms are not scary or complicated since each one of these spaces will look and feel just like the main entry room.

Chat and messaging inside of Zoom

Chat is used in the classroom settings to distribute teacher handouts, images, links, and other files. In the Zoom chat people may message with everyone publicly or with each other privately. Participants may be able to save the chats, however, mobile devices such as phones and tablets are currently unable to save chats. It is also possible to broadcast public messages that will be seen in all breakout rooms. The host of the Zoom session has the ability to control many of the chat options for the participants.

“My hesitation is that I am uncomfortable on camera or speaking.”

It is now fairly common for people to never turn on their cameras and/or microphones. Background images, fun filters, and avatars are all options instead of a camera presence. Zoom chats are available to communicate if you are uncomfortable speaking on audio. Questions and comments for class chats may be read out by a moderator or the teacher.

When will the class recording be available?

It can be challenging to find somebody with the skills, equipment, and time to edit. As a participant you can help by staying muted for things that are recorded and placing your questions in chat. If you have video editing experience and can help after the virtual event, please reach out to the event team to offer your services.

Should I install Zoom or just click the links?

The installed application gives you a much wider range of options for your personal Zoom experience than just clicking the link. Don't forget to go to the zoom.us webpage to create your free account. That will give you the ability to further define your user experience.

How can I learn more about Zoom?

Zoom does an excellent job of keeping their support pages up to date. Search “**Zoom Product Support**” and query the item you wish to understand better. Search “**Zoom Releases by Product**” for information about past, present, and future updates for various device platforms.

Suggested search terms to help you on your way

Zoom host, Zoom co-host, pin video, spotlight video, rename, speaker view, gallery view, multi-speaker view, filters, avatars, closed captions, spacebar push to talk, echo cancelation, original sound for musicians.

What are some best practices and things to remember?

Suggested Search Terms

non-video participants.

- Always allow time for potential forced updates and device restart.

- If you use a personal photo for your profile picture it may appear in recordings even if you don't want to be on screen.
- If you are teaching, you may want to remove your email from your slideshow so that it does not wind up on a social media channel.
- The view of the person recording is the view that will be on the recording. Things to consider are to pin or spotlight the teacher and turn off

What can you do to support virtual SCA?

Participate and have fun in whatever way gives you joy with this exciting new way to connect. This may look like attending, hosting, teaching, organizing, moderating, editing, or other activities that propel the SCA forward.

Please reach out to the author of this article on Facebook for help with any of your Zoom needs.

Period Medallions

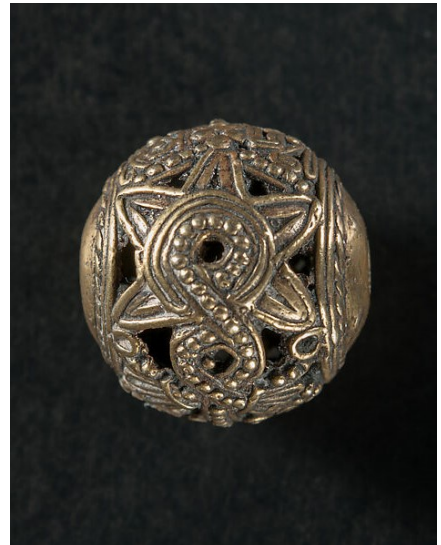
For any artisan interested in trying to reproduce period accessories, the graphics below, used courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Open Access Policy [The MET Open Access Policy: As part of the Met's Open Access policy, you can freely copy, modify and distribute this image, even for commercial purposes], show some beautiful period Medallions



Veronica's Veil—Italian
Milan 15th century



Coronation of the Virgin—
North French or Nether-
landish 15th century



Bead with Serpent & Star
Motif—Mexica 1469-81 c.e.



Pendant model with the
Labors of Hercules - Flem-
ish or German Rhineland -
1550-1600



Spanish Pendant—16th
century



Two Medallions - French -
ca. 1420



Blackfox Awards in Brief A.S. LVIII

Best Overall Newsletter

This does not necessarily mean the best-looking newsletter, but rather the newsletter which best meets the needs of the local group or guild for which it is published. It should accurately reflect the status of the group and be a valuable tool for growth

and promotion of SCA goals and ideals. This title is awarded to the newsletter and the Chronicler

Winner:

An Tir: The Jousting Squirrel, Canton of Akornebir; Chronicler: Cuthbert Weaver

Also Nominated:

Meridies: The Equinox, Shire of Sol Haven; Chronicler: Bronwen o Gydwelli

Best Layout and Design

For the best-looking newsletter in balance and style. Awarded to the newsletter and the Chronicler.

Winner:

Artemesia: The Bronzehelm Watch, Barony of Bronzehelm; Chronicler: Colgrym of Avebury

Best Artwork

For artwork on cover or interior of the newsletter. Awarded to the newsletter and the artist.

Winner:

Ansteorra: Artist: Isaac Bane; "Invitation to Yule"; The Flamebearer, Barony of Wiesenfeuer; Chronicler: Gwenyvere Rose Foxe

Best Special Issue

For Arts & Sciences issues or other limited-focus issues of a geographic group (canton, shire, barony, etc.). Awarded to the newsletter and the Chronicler.

Winner:

Ealdormere: "Remembering Enid" - The Chronicle, Skraeling Althing; Chronicler: Colyne Stewart

Best Special Interest Newsletter

This category recognizes guild newsletters, research newsletters, and Arts & Science focus newsletters (such as lace-making). Awarded to the newsletter and the Chronicler.

Winner:

Æthelmearc: The Score, Minister of the List; Chronicler: Odriana Vander Brugghe

Best Regular Feature

For cartoons, articles, columns, etc. which appear regularly in the particular newsletter. Awarded to the creator or feature writer and the newsletter.

Winner:

Artemesia: “Mangy Moose Tavern”, Author: Ambrose Norwich; The Moose Call, Barony of Arn Hold; Chronicler: Ambrose Norwich

Best Article

Recognizes excellence in articles appearing in a local newsletter. Awarded to the writer and the newsletter.

Winner:

Drachenwald: “Embroidered Book Covers”, Author: Mary Verch Thomas; Baelfyr, May 2022, Principality of Insulae Draconis

Also Nominated:

Meridies: “Staying Comfortable and Feeling Elegant at Events”, Author: Justina di Silvestri; The Read Tower, January 2023, Barony of South Downs; Chronicler: (not provided)

Best Poetry or Short Fiction

Recognizes the author of an outstanding poem or piece of short fiction. Awarded to the writer and the newsletter.

Winner:

Calontir: “Autumn Accolade”, Author: Shoshanah bas Nachman fun Magenza; The Barge, Q4 2022, Barony of Three Rivers; Chronicler: Shoshanah bas Nachman fun Magenza

KINGDOM NEWSLETTER CATEGORIES

Best Cover for a Kingdom Newsletter

Recognizes the creator of a piece provided for use as the cover of a kingdom newsletter. Awarded to the artist(s).

Winner:

Caid: The Crown Prints, “Their Royal Majesties, Adam Makandro and Staeina Halfdanadottir”, August 2022; Artist: Valentine Martyn; Chronicler: Briana MacCabe

Also Nominated:

Meridies: Seasons, March 2023; Artist: Thorfinnr landskeggr Eiriksson; Chronicler: Bronwen o Gydwelli

Best Written Contribution to a Kingdom Newsletter

Recognizes the author of an article, regular or special feature, poem, etc. provided for use by a kingdom newsletter. Awarded to the author.

Winner:

An Tir: Cormac Mor, “Heraldic Flags: Banners”, The Crier, April 2023; Chronicler: Kenryth filia Gerald

Also Nominated:

Meridies: Ulrich von Brandenburg, “How Meridian Grand Tournament Works”, *The Popular Chivalry*, September 2022; **Chronicler:** Jane Wolfden

Best Artistic Contribution to a Kingdom Newsletter

Recognizes the artist of artwork or photography used in the interior of a kingdom newsletter. Awarded to the artist(s).

Winner:

Ealdormere: Augusta Weyfare, “Marginal Mayhem”, *Tidings*, January 2023; **Chronicler:** Augusta Weyfare

Commendation:

Meridies: Kate Stormshore, artwork page 3, *The Popular Chivalry*, September 2022; **Chronicler:** Jane Wolfden

Hail to Their new **Majesties Barthelemy and Oda**, pictured left as Prince and Princess at Spring Crown Lyst, and Coronated on 12 October, A.S. LIX — long may they reign!



Photo Credit: Mistress Ellen DeLacey

Likewise, we congratulate the new Royal Heirs, Crown Prince and Princess, **Their Royal Highnesses Lochlainn & Paraskova** on Their victory on 9 November, A.S. LIX at Fall Crown Lyst. HRH Lochlainn emerged victorious following a well-fought tourney with fourteen noble combatants, and the new Heirs stand ready to step forward should any *totally unexpected and unprecedented* tragedy ever befall their current Royal Majesties Barthelemy and Oda.



Photo Credit: THL Rose Rennel

An All-Too Brief History of Making Bio-Char for Fire Tinder

THL Oengus mac GillaDubain, Sable Baron



“Crumple cotton, silk, or paper until it is soft. Divide it into small amounts, and dry-roast it until it is black, paying attention that it doesn’t burn white. Keep it within a tightly covered container and be sure to always have some at hand.” [1]

Introduction

The quotation above is translated from a 16th century Japanese manuscript now known as the *Shinobi Hiden* and attributed to Hattori Hanzo. Reputed to be the earliest written mention of what is known as bio-char used for tinder in firemaking, it gives us a documentary foundation for the history of its manufacture, which it manages to describe fully in just a few words. One might think there’s more to it than that, but that really is how simple it is to make bio-char! We’ll get to that part in a bit.

Part 1: The Science of Fire

Fire has been central to human survival and civilization for millennia, providing warmth, protection, and a means to cook food. The ability to start a fire quickly and reliably has been, for most of human history, a crucial skill, especially in the pre-industrial world.

1.1 Early Fire-Making Techniques

The core of firemaking is the creation of an ember. Once there is a suitable ember, tinder can be used to create the flame to which kindling is applied to make a fire. For the majority of humanity’s existence, the ember has been created using friction-based methods, such as the *bow drill*, the *hand drill*, and the *fire plough*. However, these methods can be quite labour-intensive, requiring significant time and effort. These methods of firemaking characterise the Lithic Ages (Palaeo-, Meso-, and Neolithic), but are still used throughout the world still today.



Once humans enter the Metal Ages (Copper, Bronze, and Iron), exposure to the effects of lithics on metallic minerals – e.g., pyrite, a sulfide with significant iron content – presented an innovative way to catch fire by striking the pyrite against, say, flint, to cast a spark that might create an ember in a tinder bed. This percussion-based method appears, from all the evidence, to be what Ötzi “The Iceman” used, as flint and chaga (Inonotus obliquus, left), a fungus that parasitises the birch tree, were both found in his survival kit, although no pyrite was found there.

Once metal tools became available, people developed more efficient percussion methods like the use of *flint and steel*. Although the same basic process, striking a hard rock such as flint against high-carbon steel creates more reliable and abundant sparks than pyrite, and that makes tinder easier. People used a variety of natural tinder materials in addition to fungi like chaga and *horse hoof fungus* (*Fomes fomentarius*, right), from which *amadou* is made. Dried grass, bark, and animal down have all been used. While all these materials worked, they wouldn't prove to be as consistent or reliable as char cloth. The discovery or invention of char cloth revolutionized the process of tinder production, making fire-starting quicker and more efficient.



1.2 A History of Char Cloth



The exact cultural origins of char cloth are difficult to pinpoint, as this simple yet effective technology likely emerged in different regions by independent invention. Char cloth likely became widespread in Europe during the Middle Ages, as ironworking and steel production became more common. Flint and steel kits were widely used among soldiers, explorers, hunters, and travelers, and char cloth became a reliable source of tinder in these kits.

As mentioned at the outset of the essay, one of the earliest documented references to char cloth comes to us from a ninjutsu manual written by Hattori Hanzō in 1560 called the *Ninpiden* or *Shinobi Hiden*, or *Legends of Ninja Secrets*. Recall that this manual instructs the reader (who at the time would have been *bona fide* ninjas) to “dry-roast” small amounts of cotton, silk, or paper “until it is black,” but it doesn't mention a specific method for such dry-roasting. Since at least the 18th century, that method has consisted in using small metal containers. But, what about before such containers were prevalent? Remember, fire is ubiquitous, and there must be a story for the origins of char cloth.

Murky as its history may be, the science of char cloth (and bio-char generally) is more clear. Char cloth has traditionally been made from natural plant fibers such as *cotton*, *flax* (right), or even *hemp*. This method involves placing the material – often fabric or rope – in a sealed container, and exposing the container to a heat source, such as the coals of an open fire. The combination of a closed container and heat creates a low-oxygen environment, which prevents combustion. The natural plant fibers contain *cellulose*, which breaks down under heat, in a process called *pyrolysis*, to create a carbon-rich material that ignites with minimal spark. This process was likely discovered as an extension of the broader use of charred materials for fire-making



Which brings us back to the question, what about before metal containers were prevalent? Knowing the science helps us propose an answer. Because we know bio-char is made through pyrolysis, and we know pyrolysis occurs in a low-oxygen environment, and a low-oxygen environment can be created by creating an enclosed space, we can conjecture that any sufficiently enclosed space that can be subjected to a sufficient level and duration of heat can generate the conditions for pyrolysis and therefore the creation of bio-char.



Now, we have but to consider an already ancient technology, viz., the creation of charcoal. One of the most common methods is heaping seasoned wood together into a pile and covering it with soil, then slowly heating it without combustion until the water and volatile components are removed. So, consider a scenario in which what is known about this plant material, i.e., wood, is applied in an experimental way to what is unknown about another plant material, say, a length of scrap hemp rope.

The scrap of rope is buried in the ashes and soil beneath an existing fire pit and allowed to stay there until the fire burns down. It is then removed and examined.

Whether or not our scenario was executed in ancient times, we know that scenario works. Being covered with ash allows very little, if any, oxygen to get to the cloth. A sufficiently low-oxygen, high heat environment can be created this way and transform natural plant fibers into bio-char. It's just a small step from burying it in the ashes to placing it in a covered clay pot and, unsurprisingly, pyrolysis is achieved under the right conditions. And once we have the technology of making bio-char in a portable container, any adequate container (like a very portable tin can) will do the job. And the rest is history.

Part 2: How to Make Char Cloth with Ordinary Materials

2.1 Materials and Tools Needed

Making char cloth at home is a simple and rewarding process that requires only a few basic materials and tools. Most of these items can be found around the house or purchased inexpensively. Here's what you will need:



Natural Fabric: 100% cotton, linen, or another cellulose-based fabric works best. Old t-shirts, cotton handkerchiefs, or pieces of linen are ideal. It's important to ensure the fabric is 100% natural, as synthetic blends won't char properly and may melt or produce harmful fumes.

Metal Tin with Lid: An empty *Altoids* tin or any small metal container with a tight-fitting lid will work.

Heat Source: An open flame, such as a campfire, wood stove, or even a gas stove. An outdoor source is ideal to avoid indoor smoke.



Tongs or Gloves: To handle the hot tin during the process.

2.2 Steps for Making Char Cloth

Follow these steps to make char cloth:

Prepare the Fabric: Cut your natural fabric into small squares or strips, about 2 to 3 inches on each side. The pieces should be small enough to fit loosely in your metal container.



Prepare the Tin: If you are using an Altoids tin or a similar container, make sure it has a hole (about 1-2 millimeters wide) punched in it. This allows gases to escape without letting oxygen in.

Load the Tin: Place the cut fabric pieces into the metal tin, making sure they are not packed too tightly – there should be some room for air to circulate. Close the lid securely.

Heat the Tin: Place the tin on the heat source. If using a campfire, nestle the tin in the coals, or place it directly on



the embers or a grill. If using a gas stove, set the tin over a medium flame.

Monitor the Tin: As it heats up, smoke and gas will escape through the hole. This is a normal sign that pyrolysis is occurring. Heat for 5-10 minutes. Small flames from the hole are normal.



Cool Down: Once the smoke has stopped, remove the tin from the heat using tongs or gloves. Allow it to cool completely. Opening the tin while still hot could cause the char cloth to ignite.

Inspect the Char Cloth: Once cool, check it out! It should be black, lightweight, and easy to tear; retain its structure; and crumble easily. Any brown or beige pieces are uncharred.

Your char cloth is now ready to use as tinder!

2.3 Using Char Cloth



To use your char cloth to start a fire using flint and steel, follow these steps:

1. Have a tinder bundle made from fine, dry materials like grass, bark, or wood shavings prepared to receive the char cloth ember.
2. Place a small piece of char cloth on the top of your flint, right at the edge.
3. Strike a steel striker against the flint to produce sparks.





4. When a spark lands on the char cloth, it will begin to glow red. You may need to gently blow on it to help the ember grow.
5. Once the ember has spread, carefully wrap the tinder bundle around the char cloth and continue blowing gently until the tinder ignites into flame.

Char cloth excels because it catches even small, weak sparks and holds an ember for a long time, allowing you to transfer the ember to your tinder bundle.

Conclusion

Based on this very brief exploration of fire-making, bio-char, and char cloth in particular, you should have everything you need to become a proficient fire-starter without having to rely on modern methods. If this sort of thing appeals to you, I would urge you to increase your knowledge and skills by joining up with the Royal Foresters of Meridies, a guild for those interested in camping, pavilioning, outdoor living, and survival in a period fashion, and who strive to research, educate, recreate, and demonstrate their knowledge and skills for others. The main hub for the guild is the Facebook group, Royal Foresters of Meridies, found here:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/MeridiesForesters/?ref=share&mibextid=NSMWBT>

Notes:

1. Cummins, Antony. *The Secret Traditions of the Shinobi: Hattori Hanzo's Shinobi Hiden and Other Ninja Scrolls*. Berkeley, California: Blue Snake Books, 2012.
2. All photos are public domain or personal images taken by the author.





Peerage Elevations in the Fall

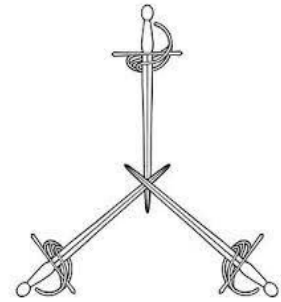
Please join with us to congratulate the following nobles who, by virtue of their achievements, were elevated unto the Peerages during the past Season (and three earlier elevations that we missed):



Eoin Mac Cana—to Pelican (November 9th at Fall Crown List)

Stefano Roggio - to Master of Defense (November 23rd at Castle Wars)

Essyllt Prasadóstra - to Pelican (November 23rd at Castle Wars)



Planned Future Elevations

Seumas Last of Gyver—to Pelican (December 7th at Magna Faire)

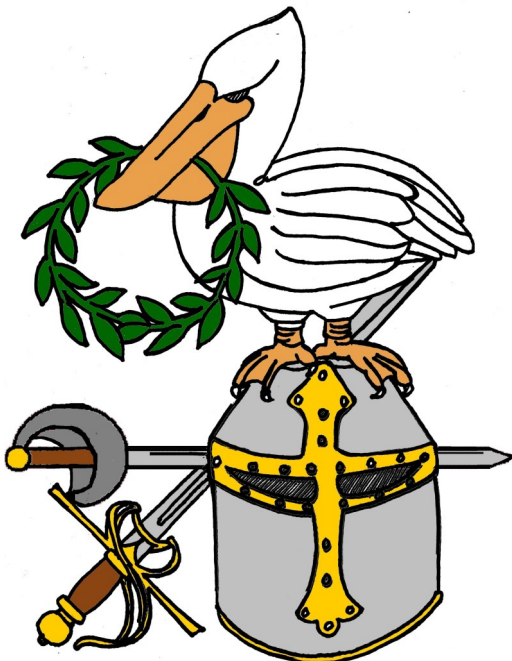
Xanthe Ifantes—to Pelican (December 14th at Winter Market)

Constanza Consuela Ximena de Valencia - to Pelican (at Gulf Wars)

Additional Announced Writs:

Adelaide Colette de Monferrer - To Pelican (Date & Event TBA)

Lykaina of Stone Hill Keep - to Laurel (Date & Event TBA)



Great effort is made to keep up with all Peerage elevations in our Kingdom, but if we somehow have missed mentioning any Peerage elevations and/or dates in the section above — or if we have missed notifying of any writs issued, and/or any dates set for future elevations — please feel free to notify the Editor at seasons@meridies.org so that these can be mentioned in the Spring Issue, due out at the beginning of March A.S. LIX.

Winter in the Garden

Meistres Bronwen o Gydweli

Winter is a dormant season for many varieties of plant, but not for all. According to researchers, a plant's "circadian clock" regulates growth and reproduction by keeping the plant from flowering when it's a poor time (like the dead of winter when we have long nights and short days) to reproduce, and then telling the plant when it's a good time to start that cycle up again. As a result, even perennials tend to have a dormant period, while annuals seed and then die.



WOODCUT FROM THE TITLE-PAGE OF THE "GRETE HERBALL" (1520)



Though most vegetables do not grow or bear in winter, some vegetables, including Endive, Carrots, Broccoli, Silverbeet, Parsley, Cauliflower, Kohl Rabi, Cabbage, Parsnips, Leeks, Onions, Turnips, Snow Peas, Leeks, Swede, Spinach, Onions, and Lettuce, are reputedly perfect for sowing (as seeds) in Autumn and Winter. (Pictured left: Carrots & Parsnips)

Winter herbs, which survive in the garden year round, include Winter Savory, Oregano, Mint, Basil (though Basil does not survive the winter in my garden, and has to be replanted every year), Parsley, Chives, Lavender (though I've never had luck with keeping Lavender alive even in warm weather), English Thyme, Tarragon, Hyssop, Chamomile, and Chervil. (Pictured right: Rosemary)



Fruit Trees like Apples, Peaches, and Plums, of course, lose their leaves and are dormant in Winter, and fruit bushes (like berries) do likewise, but blueberries and blackberries benefit from mulching, and come back every spring. *Note: I no longer try to grow strawberries because the squirrels eat those before I can harvest them, and short of growing them in wire cages I cannot keep the little demons out of my strawberry beds.* I believe that the taller

blueberries and blackberries are more difficult for them to pilfer, and am considering possibly planting and attempting to grow some Elderberries and Boysenberries next year. Wish me luck! (Pictured left and right: Blackberries & Blueberries)



Pest and Diseases, as a rule of thumb, are less common during cooler months. As a result, you may get a break from issues relating to those, but if your garden is in an area of warmer climate you well may still experience pests, and should remain watchful. Some pests are content to go to sleep for a few months before returning, but some can stay active through the cold months.

Leaf-eaters, or leaf-damaging pests like aphids, slugs, and caterpillars can take advantage of even brief warm spells to eat garden greens of all kinds. (Pictured right: Aphid)



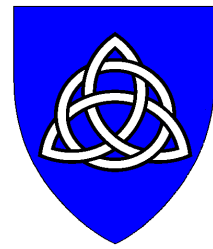
Soil-dwelling slugs come up to feed and return to shelter in the mulch layer or beneath rocks and garden debris. Winter-feeding aphids simply hang out on the undersides of leaves, hoping to avoid notice. Populations can swell tremendously during mild weather. Not only do these leaf eaters damage the foliage by chewing holes in cool weather veggies and other plants, but they also transmit plant diseases. (Pictured left: Slug)

Otherwise, when winterizing your garden it's suggested that you add a layer of "finished compost and mulch". The instructions I found suggested pushing aside the existing, older mulch, pulling any weeds, and then adding about a 1/2" layer of the finished compost — then lightly covering the beds with the old (pushed aside) mulch to suppress weeds and to protect the soil without insulating the beds. Apparently, you don't want to insulate the beds because many pests and diseases are killed off when the soil freezes in the Winter. Use a thick, insulating mulch to protect roots, move containers into sheltered locations, and cover evergreen foliage in freezing temperatures and you should do well.



A Newcomers Note:

Winter is not just coming, it's now upon us, and both traditionally and meteorologically that means that there tend to be fewer Events hosted in our Glorious Kingdom. There are, as you might well expect, several reasons for this.



One is that there are a number of important mundane holidays celebrated (with correspondingly more family visits and trips) over the Winter — Christmas and New Years come immediately to mind, but also Hanukkah , Kwanzaa, Yom Kippur, Yule, and others.

Another reason is that the weather is colder and many of the sites we use are not winterized. While cabins may be available, some of these are unheated, and a few may only have screens rather than glass windows. As a result, many such sites close down for the Winter, meaning that we have fewer sites available to use.

But watch for those exceptions, and we look forward to seeing you at some!!

Good Eventing!



Cover Art Needed



For all those aspiring, or established, Artists of Meridies, SEASONS is always on the prowl for Cover Art, and we would very much like to showcase Original Artwork done by our own talented Meridian Artists rather than using photographs.

If you have period-style, or period-themed, or SCA-themed drawings in your portfolios — or still waiting impatiently to be drawn — or scribal works you wouldn't mind sharing, please consider submitting them for use as Cover (or Filler) Art for use in this supplement.

An Artist Release Form will be required — the link to which can be found at <https://meridies.org/home/royaltyandofficers/chronicler/>

Poetry Corner

Winter is Coming

Meistres Bronwen o Gydweli

Winter is coming with frost on her breath,
To silver the forests at Autumn's bright death;
With ice on her fingers, upon a white steed,
And rime in her hair as she wanders the mead.

Winter is coming the lands to remake;
The hems of her garments leave jewels in their wake.
'Neath crystalline twilights her songs ride the winds,
And nature is restful when Winter descends.

Spring came with greening, upon a soft prayer;
Summer with blossoms and birds in her hair;
Autumn held ripening fruits to her breast;
Now Winter is coming to give the world rest.

[01 September, A.S. LVIII, 2023]



Heraldry After Hours

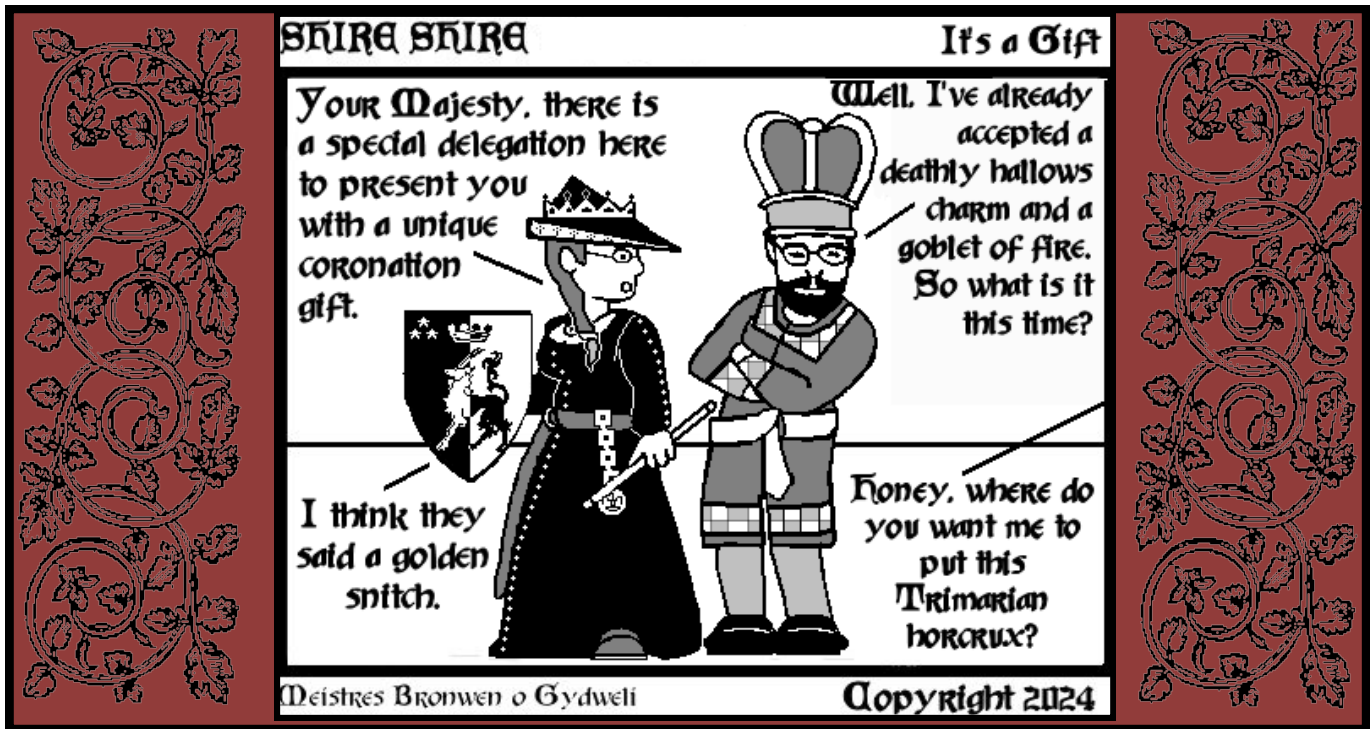
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8PM Central (US)
Tuesdays Weekly



Acknowledgements and Thanks

Thank you to **Danielle Byrd** for this issue's Cover Art, to **The Metropolitan Museum of Art** whose Open Access Policy allowed us freely to reprint images of objects from their Open Access Collection to this periodical, to **Mistress Ellen DeLacey** for her article "Zoom in the SCA" and for her Photo of Their Majesties, To **Baroness Rose Rennel** for permission to use her Photograph of Their Highnesses, and to **THLord Oengus mac Gilla Dubhain** for his article "An All-Too Brief History of Making Bio-Char for Fire Tinder"



My abject apologies for a mis-attribution in the last issue. I do not know how this happened, but an article written by **THLord Oengus mac Gilla Dubhain (aka Thomas Thomas of Wood Ditton)** was credited to Master Wistric Oftun. I suspect that my cut-and-paste function was possessed by Jabberwocks or, more likely, that trying to remember mundane names for Facebook use complicated the matter. Sorry! My fault entirely!

Special thanks also to the Kingdom Chronicler **Baroness Ana de Granada** for her patience and her assistance, and to my Deputies **Maestra Dianora Lizabetta di Vittori di Cellini**, and **Lord Leopold Guotmann** for their ongoing assistance and their contributions to this issue, to wit: "Spilling the Royal Tea" (Leopold)!! Also to less official (but no less appreciated) Deputy **Mistress Christianna MacGrain** for "Winter in the Kitchen".

In Gratitude.....

Bronwen



Submissions for SEASONS (and we definitely invite them) should be sent directly to the Editor at seasons@meridies.org, and accompanied by any graphics (in .JPG format) and by an appropriate Creative Release Form. These forms can be found on-line at <https://meridies.org/home/resources-and-reports/> under “Chronicler Resources”. The deadline for submissions to the Spring Seasons will be March 1st.

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Articles submitted to SEASONS should be short to moderate length, and deal with topics of interest to the populace. Artwork should, ideally, be at least 300 dpi and deal with period or SCA subject matter, or be presented in a period style. The deadlines for submissions are (Spring) March 1st, (Summer) June 1st, (Autumn) September 1st, and (Winter) December 1st.