

The Aerie



<http://www.godecookery.com/clipart/biblical/bibl019.jpg>

DECEMBER A.S. LIII (2018)

Cum An Iolair Calendar

(Events in bold are local)

December 2018

- 7 Shire Meeting: St. Thomas the Apostle 12251 Antioch Rd.-7pm
9 Kris Kinder—Forgotten Sea (Kansas City, MO)
14 Cook's Guild 7:30 at Marguerite's 7216 Cottonwood Shawnee, KS.
21 Shire Meeting: St. Thomas the Apostle 12251 Antioch Rd.-7 pm (Holiday Party)

January 2019

- 4 Shire Meeting: St. Thomas the Apostle 12251 Antioch Rd.-7pm
5 Twelfth Night—Lonely Tower (Omaha, NE)
11 Cook's Guild 7:30 at Marguerite's 7216 Cottonwood Shawnee, KS.
12 Winter Coronation—Vatavia (Wichita, KS)
18 Shire Meeting: St. Thomas the Apostle 12251 Antioch Rd.-7 pm.
26 Winter War Maneuvers—Mag Mor (Lincoln, NE)

February 2019

- 1 Shire Meeting: St. Thomas the Apostle 12251 Antioch Rd.-7pm
2 **Clothier's Seminar**—Cum an Iolair (S. Johnson County, KS)
8 Cook's Guild 7:30 at Marguerite's 7216 Cottonwood Shawnee, KS.
9 **Queen's Prize**—Lost Moor (St. Joseph, MO)
15 Shire Meeting: St. Thomas the Apostle 12251 Antioch Rd.-7 pm.
23 Chieftains—Three Rivers (St. Louis, MO)

Shire Birthday List

December

- 10 Zarra bint Uziel

January

- 1 Thomas the Black
24 Alisaundre Muir
27 Ki No Kotori
28 Thomas de Lepe

February

- 6 John Bowyer
12 Ysabel de la Oya
28 Vittoria (Megan)

Note from Chronicler

We need articles, book reviews and event reports for *The Aerie*. Please submit those by the 25th of each month to chronicler@shireofcai.org. It would be especially helpful if people wrote event reviews. It is so simple to write them since you go to events already. The Holiday Party will be December 21st. Please bring a dish to share and a \$10 gift for the gift exchange. Hope we see many there & that everyone had a good time at the Kris Kinder Mart. Speaking of which, Fiona found out at Kris Kinder that she was nominated for the William Blackfox Award for Best Regular Feature for the Cook's Letter (it was back in 2015, but hey, going to own it). **We need a new Herald!!!! See the Seneschal if you are interested!!!!**

Letter from the Cook's Guild

by HL Fiona nic Gormliatha
(Used with permission)

Cook's Guild meets the second Friday of every month at Her Excellency Marguerite's (7216 Cottonwood, Shawnee, KS) give her a call at (913) 268-0416 for directions.

The theme for the October cook's meeting was Harvest Foods we had Mylates of pork—pork pies from the "Forme of Cury" (dating from the 1400's). Start by taking 2-3 lbs. Of pork, cut into 1 inch cubes & cook if not already cooked (we started with ground pork). Mix with 4 eggs, 1 C grated mozzarella, ¼ C pine nuts, ¼ tsp salt, 1 pinch saffron & 1 ½ tsp. Powder fort. Which is a sort of medieval 5-spice mix usually consisting of 2 parts (Tbs. usually) cinnamon, pepper (often mixed with long pepper

if you can find it) & ginger sometimes a whole grated nutmeg & a pinch (¾ tsp) cloves).

Mix well & put in a pastry-lined pie pan (9in.) & cover with crust & bake at 350o for 30 mins. Until golden brown, serve either hot or cold. We really liked this pie, there was enough filling to make 2 of them—one we rolled out the crust to make the pork look like a fish!

Then we roasted a hen in the method from “Libellus De Arte Coquinaria”--take a 4-6 lb. Chicken cut up & put in a roasting pan with 1 C each white wine & chicken broth & 1-2 bruised cloves of garlic & bake for 1-1/2 hours at 350o. Check after 1 hour, baste & turn the pan in the oven, when done, remove from oven. Let cool a bit & pour out the pan juices into a saucepan & thicken with 2 egg yolks to serve on the side as a sauce. We liked this but we had another sauce to serve with this chicken. Black Sauce (from Curye on English, recipe by Daniel Myers): Take the chicken liver & cook it, then puree; add ¼ tsp. Each anise seed, ground grains of paradise, ginger & cinnamon—point up with ¼ C verjuice (can use pickle juice or half & half mix of water & vinegar), 2 Tbs. Butter or animal fat & thicken with 1 Tbs. Breadcrumbs in a saucepan bring to a boil simmer & serve. Not a bad sauce, could not taste the chicken liver, so all was good.

One of the side dishes was Roman Spiced Squash from Apicius (4th Century AD). Take 2-3 acorn squash (or 2 butternut or one large hubbard, 1 pumpkin can be used, but pumpkins are very late period), cut up into uniform pices & remove the seeds (which you can toast later—1 Tbs melted butter & ½ tsp salt to each cup of seeds), put in saucepan cover with water & boil until tender. Strain out water & scoop out of peel (easier now) & dry with paper towels & arrange in a baking dish. In a small bowl, mix ¼ tsp. Each pepper, cumin, & rue (a bit hard to find, could use oregano instead); 1 ½ C vegetable or chicken stock & 1 Tbs each vinegar and port (wine)--pour over squash & cook in 350o oven for 2o minutes or until the squash has started to caramelize. Lightly dust with more pepper & serve. This would make a nice side dish at a fall or winter feast, especially for vegetarians. There was a Salad of turnip greens (although spinach can be substituted); combine 2 C. chopped turnip greens, ½ C julienned fennel (along with some feathery fennel tops), ½ an apple also julienned, ¼ C golden raisins, 1 Tbs. Lemongrass, thinly sliced (can be found at Oriental market), ¼ C chopped walnuts (candied is even better). Toss, drizzle with balsamic vinegar for dressing & sprinkle with edible flowers if you have any & serve. I had never had a turnip greens salad before; it was surprisingly good.

Since we had to buy the turnips to have the greens we ended up making “Turnips baked with cheese” from “Plyen Delite”(Medieval Cookery for modern Cooks): peel & boil 2 lbs of turnips until barely tender (we sliced them as well, to hurry the cooking)--have a buttered casserole dish ready & grate 10-12 oz.(2 C.) Swiss cheese like Gruyere or a mix of Swiss & cheddar. Layer turnips then cheese dot with butter (use up ¼ lb. or 1 stick) & pinch each allspice & nutmeg then next layer ending with cheese, butter, spices. Cook in 350o oven until cheese melted & serve it forth. This is true medieval comfort food, with melty cheese, Yum.

For dessert there was apple pie—with two crusts, start with 6 cups of sliced peeled apples, mix ½ C sugar (brown sugar is best), 2 Tbs. Flour, ½ tsp. Cinnamon, ¼ tsp. freshly grated nutmeg & toss with apples. Sprinkle with 1 tsp. Almond

flavoring, put in prepared 9-inch pie plate & top with second crust & poke in some steam holes (we had one of those pottery birds to release the steam). Bake at 350o for 35 minutes or until the crust is golden, let cool for at least 15 minutes (for the liquid to reabsorb) & serve it forth!

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Drink to Make Merry

by HL Fiona nic Gormliatha

(used with permission)

Well now that we have our bread & butter & cheese, to eat with our medieval meal, now we need something to wash it down. Some people made do with water, often nicknamed “the poor man's ale” but this could lead to sickness. As most people had no idea about germ theory, or how far away the privy should be from the well, spring or other water source. There were certain drinks that would be used instead, (fortunately!)--mainly because most people thought, that water was bad for digestion (and they were sometimes right!). Plus it was often a class thing, nobody wanted to be thought that poor!

Covering non-alcoholic drinks first, we have milk of course (which was more often thought proper for women, children & priests), along with buttermilk, kumis, etc. and then almond milk—which was often the basis for Lenten cooking in Catholic areas, as use of milk or eggs, meat, fat was forbidden/restricted during this fasting time. Almond milk is made by taking ½ C ground almonds (blanched, or without their dark skins is best) & steeping in 1 C. warm/hot water for at least 15 minutes, (an hour or overnight is ideal). After which you can strain out the nut meal & either use it in another recipe or to “draw up” or steep a second, thinner batch of almond milk. If you don't want the milk to be too gritty you can use a fine-mesh strainer or colander lined with cheesecloth to get out the ground almonds. So almond milk is period, but not the vanilla flavoring.

There is tea, of course but it is generally held to be something used in China & Japan. It was not introduced to Europe until the time of Marco Polo about 1555 or so by Portuguese missionaries about 1560/or by the Dutch East India Company in 1601 (just out of period)--as you can see, there is some contention as to the date. First record of tea use in China date is from 480 AD where it was extolled as a medicinal drink that soon became a well-loved drink for everyone. Tea was cultivated on bushes, picked, fermented, kneaded & ultimately pressed into bricks for ease of trade travel. To use, just flake off the tea brick, steep in hot water for at least 5-10 minutes & maybe strain (and often reuse the leaves!) & serve.

Then you have your flavored waters, one of the oldest is barley water, which was used as a drink by those who labored in the fields in ancient Greece (it was sacred to Demeter, goddess of the fields—called Ceres by the Romans). Take 1 C cleaned barley (rinse it until water runs clear) & simmer in 6 C water for at least 25 minutes until barley is tender. Then strain--if wished—it was often served with a spoon in Turkey & other Asian countries. Flavor with 5 mint leaves for a cooling drink, point up with ½ Tbs. Acid like lemon juice or vinegar & sweeten (if possible) with ½ Tbs. Of honey, sugar, or a chopped up date, while the water is still warm so the flavors have time to meld.

Barley water is part of other sweet vinegar drinks used at this time, variations on that theme, like sekenjabin--a drink popular in the Middle East. Start by making a simple syrup of say 2 C.

sugar or 1 ½ C of honey & boiling in 1 C. water or 1 C. each water & vinegar then cool & flavor with mint (a handful) or pomegranate or other fruit juice. This syrup was stored in a clean bottle & was mixed with cold water to taste—sort of like medieval Koolaid! As an added plus, it seems that vinegar (especially apple cider vinegar), kills most germs in water, rendering it safer to drink—and note that most of these recipes require the boiling of water!

Other flavored waters are sage or coriander water where sage leaves or coriander seeds were steeped to make a drink often used as a palate cleanser at meals. Usually just a handful of sage leaves or a Tbs. Of coriander, seeds were soaked in a pitcher of water overnight & then mixed to taste with more water. Rose or lavender syrups were made as well to add to water for a drink—1 part rose/lavender petals (dried is just as good as fresh here); 2 parts water & 2 parts sugar/honey—same held true for lemonade. There was also chicory water, which is mentioned in Cervantes' "Don Quixote" (published in 1600, just barely in Period), just put some chicory root shavings in your pitcher or water skin. Other flavorings were mint, cucumber & borage, which is a nice plant with bright blue flowers that taste a bit like cucumber, that were often, candied and put on cakes or other food as edible garnish.

Then there were the fruit-based juices, like Grantus—which was a spiced pomegranate drink (with mace, cinnamon, cloves, lemon peel, etc.) as opposed to Grenadine, which was just pomegranate syrup, diluted & sweetened to taste. Any berry or fruit that could be squeezed/juiced was. Usually the fruit was crushed & put in a jelly bag of linen & the juice allowed to drip overnight (if you wanted clear juice) but more often crushed & added to the water.

Everyone has heard of cider, of course & apples were bred/developed just for drinking—depending on whether one wanted a sweet or bittersweet cider of course, so different varieties of apples were chosen to get the desired flavor profile. Apples had to be domesticated by the way, all apples are descended from the Central Asian *malus sieversii*, the Romans took the basic apple, which was very much like the crab apple & bred it into the larger, sweeter apple we know today. They even had a goddess of the Orchard by the name of Pomona.

But there was also murrin—a drink made of mulberry juice; peary from pears & prunelle from plums. And of course, time could turn the sweet cider to hard (alcoholic) cider. Which brings us to those drinks to make us very merry.

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