

The Aerie



Death and the lady. From *Der Doten Dantz* (Dance of the Dead), printed by Heinrich Knoblochzer, Heidelberg, 1490

OCTOBER A.S. LIII (2018)

Cum An Iolair Calendar

(Events in bold are local)

October 2018

- 5 Shire Meeting: St. Thomas the Apostle 12251 Antioch Rd.-7pm
- 6 Autumn Arrows—Calanais Nuadh (Rolla, MO)
- 13 Fall Crown Tournament—Flinthyll (Burlington, IA)
- 19 Shire Meeting: St. Thomas the Apostle 12251 Antioch Rd.-7 pm
- 20 The Silk Trade Road from Grimfells—Grimfells (Pineville, AR)
Vertigo—Lost Moor (St. Joseph, MO)
- 26 Cook's Guild 7:30 at Marguerite's 7216 Cottonwood Shawnee, KS. **Date has been changed!**
- 27 Fall War College—Moonstone (Burlington, KS)
Harvest Home—Standing Stones (Columbia, MO)

November 2018

- 2 Shire Meeting: St. Thomas the Apostle 12251 Antioch Rd.-7pm
- 3 Fall RUSH: Book Arts—Lonely Tower (Omaha, NE)
- 9 Cook's Guild 7:30 at Marguerite's 7216 Cottonwood Shawnee, KS.
- 10 Plebian Games—Amlethsmore (Hallsville, MO)
- 16 Shire Meeting: St. Thomas the Apostle 12251 Antioch Rd.-7 pm
- 17 Toys for Tots—Wyvern Cliffe (Jefferson City, MO)

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 (**Possible Holiday Party??**)

Shire Birthday List

October

- 21 Alfgeirr Skytja

November

- 5 Modar Neznanich
Tegan Ford
- 14 Kim Sarsfield
- 17 Adelaide Sarsfield
- 20 Miguel Navas de Mijorca
- 30 Geoffrey Lucas

December

- 10 Zarra bint Uziel

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. We need to make a decision on the Holiday Party and confirm the date of the Brookdale Demo. **We need a new Herald!!!! See the Seneschal if you are interested!!!!**

Highlights of the Shire of Cum an Iolair Meeting Minutes 09-21-2018

Present: Bronwen, Miguel, Giraude, Gianlupo, Fiona, Margaurite, Thomas Wunderer von Leipzig, Rose, Gerran, Thomas Wright, Tessie, Lillian, Carmen, Mitsumi, Adelaide, Niccolo, Eibhilin, Ulrich, Zarah, Kotori

Bronwen said how proud she was of all our artisans who participated in Queen's Prize Tournament last week. Cum an Iolair had a great showing! Well done, everyone! Tessie was awarded a Leather Mallet, and Kotori joined the Order of the Calon Lily. Lillian took Adelaide on as apprentice and Rose as a Student.

A lovely pot-luck dinner was enjoyed by all. Lillian and Giraude demonstrated block printing on fabric and several people got to try that. Giraude had some pre-cut squares that after printing, she would wax so people could use them as mug-covers. Progress on 25th anniversary Cum an Iolair t-shirts. Alfgeirr has given her a high-res version of the Shire's device.. We need to figure out what text we want. Also, do we want the option of putting our SCA persona names on the back? There was also a suggestion of having a small text in front and having the device on the back. No decision made. Discussion about whether to set up a page for people to make individual orders or to make a group order. It was decided a group order would be cheaper.

Price would vary depending on size as well—companies charge more for plus-size shirts. Adelaide would like someone to make up a Google Spreadsheet so people can sign up. Fields needed are: SCA NAME, MUNDANE NAME, SIZE OF SHIRT, HOW MANY, COST, AMOUNT PAID. This will be passed to the Shire webminister, who was at an event this weekend.

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 was English comfort food, most of the recipes came from "Making A Meal of It :Two Thousand years of English Cookery", from the section on Tudor recipes. For the entree, we had Real Mince Pie; start by mincing 1 ¼ lbs. Lean mutton or beef & mix with 4 oz. (½ C.) suet, a pinch of saffron, ½ tsp. Each ground cloves & black pepper, 1 tsp. Ground mace, & 2 oz (¼ C.) each raisins, currants & chopped pitted prunes. You can either make a pastry as directed in the recipe, but we just made a piecrust mix for 8 inch pie, lined the pie plate, put in the filling, put on top crust with water to dampen the edge, poke in a hole to let the steam escape & glaze with 1 Tbs. Each butter, sugar & rosewater melted together. Bake in 425o oven for 15 mins. Then lower heat to 350o for 1 ½ hours until crust is browned. Rather liked this pie, back when there really was meat in mincemeat pies!

Thick pea pottage: A staple of English cuisine! Start by beating together 1 oz. Fresh bread crumbs (1/8 C.), 1 egg yolk, 1 tsp. Each chopped parsley & salt, ½ tsp. Ground ginger & a pinch of saffron. Bring 1 C. milk nearly to a boil, pour in 12 oz. (about 1 ¾ C.) cooked peas or 1-19 oz. Can of peas (drained, I am sure?), add the breadcrumb mixture & bring to a boil over a low heat, stirring constantly. Serve it forth, either as a soup or side vegetable. So nice to feel the green peas burst on the roof of your mouth!

Cabbage chowder: take a firm hearted cabbage, cut into 8 segments & remove the center core, or if you have an open hearted cabbage or other green (kale, chard, etc.), cut off the stalk & cut into strips & put into a pan with 8 oz. (1 C.) each peeled & chopped onion & white part of leeks, cut into rings & washed. Make the stock by stirring into 3 ¼ C. chicken or vegetable broth ½ tsp salt (add more if needed), pinch of saffron & ¼ tsp. Each ground coriander, cinnamon & sugar & pour over the veggies. Cook gently, covered for about 20 minutes or until thickest parts of cabbage are tender.

This is a pretty good side dish, get your greens on! In the Middle ages, toast points & bacon were often added to make this a main dish.

"Departed" creamed fish: No, this is not dead fish, in this case the fish is divided into two parts & one left plain & the other colored with saffron or (de-) Parti colored. Start by poaching 1 ¼ lb. Cod fillet (light-colored, mild tasting fish) in 2 C. salted water until cooked through, drain off the cooking liquid into a (large) measuring cup. Pour 1 ¼ C. of the hot poaching liquid over ½ C. ground almonds (making almond milk here) & while it steeps, press excess liquid out of the fish on a cloth & flake it. Strain almond milk into a jug & put it & fish into a blender & process until smooth, adding more cooking liquid if the mixture is stiff, turn into a bowl. In another small bowl mix 2 tsp. Rice

flour (or cornstarch) with 3-4 Tbs. Cooking liquid into a "cream & mix into fish paste & salt a bit. Spoon half the mixture into a separate bowl & tint with 3 Tbs. Saffron water (made by taking 3 Tbs. Fish water & letting 2-3 crushed threads of saffron steep in it until it is a pleasing yellow) or yellow food coloring (but where's the fun in that?) & flavor with ½ tsp. Ground ginger & ¼ tsp. Sugar combined. Portion half of each color into 6 scallop shells (if you can find them, we had 4!) or 6 small dishes & chill until ready to serve strewn another ½ tsp. Sugar on as garnish if desired. This was a fun sort of subtlety to have, not too fishy in taste, & cooling for the hot weather.

Sweet Cubes of Jellied Milk: known in the Middle Ages as "white leach" Have ready 1 pint (2 C.) milk, take out 4 Tbs. Of this milk & sprinkle on it 5 tsp. (two Knox packets) of gelatin & leave for 5 minutes, then stand the cup in a pan of hot water & stir until the gelatin is completely dissolved. Warm the remaining milk, stir in gelatin & ½ C. sugar & simmer, stirring constantly for 5 minutes. Remove from heat, stir in 1 Tbs. Or 5 tsp. Rosewater & pour into a shallow baking dish (about 6 in. square) which has been freshly rinsed in cold water, allow to set firmly in a cool place before cutting into squares with a sharp knife. Stack into a pyramid or flat plate ready for the table. This is a great summer palate cleanser dessert, even better when served with the following recipe.

Cherry Pudding: Start with 2 C. pitted or frozen cherries, add the juice of ½ lemon if desired, especially if using sweet cherries; 2 C. good quality white breadcrumbs (no crusts), 1/3 C. sugar, ¼ C. red wine or ½ C. wine with ¼ C. water or use cherry juice drained from can or frozen, 2 Tbs. Butter. To cook either put in saucepan on stove top & cook, stirring for 5 minutes or until pudding is thickened or put in a greased baking dish & bake at 350o for 20 minutes (or microwave for 5 mins.). May be served warm, room temp or chilled. We served it warm, with the jellied milk slowly melting into the rick red. Yum! A great meal all around.

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Butter Thy Daily Bread

The quest for a simple meal in the Middle Ages

by HL Fiona nic Gormliatha

(used with permission)

After the sheer amount of work to produce the daily bread, we still aren't finished with making a meal, after all, some breads were so thick & dense that they needed some sort of spread to get it down, like maybe butter! Or even a nice soft cheese, and for that we need a cow or a goat, sheep, camel, buffalo (as opposed to the American bison), Yak, mare? (all have had their milk used)!

In ancient times, the first of the prey animals to be domesticated may have been goats, followed by sheep & then cows. Domesticated animals differ genetically from their wild cousins as they have been bred by humans for so long. But at any rate, you have your herd beast that will provide you milk, as well as wool, meat or hides. Everything from white Park cattle (brought to England by the Romans!), longhorns, shorthorns, Jersey, Guernsey, Ayrshire. Hereford, Devon, Danish Red, Shaggy red Scots Highland cows & Norman Brindle to name a few.

Now to keep your milk cow (or goat or sheep) in milk it must be "freshened" that is to say, it must be pregnant, since that will have it produce milk to feed its young—and the people that care

for it. In medieval times that meant that the cow would visit a bull every year (or every other year), & that meant some sort of fee, usually paid to...you guessed it, the well-off noble or churchman that owned said stud, but they usually took payment in kind, like a portion of the milk, butter or cheese that the milch beast would produce—usually 10 percent. To give you some idea of proportions, a cow in full milk could be expected to produce 98 pounds of cheese & butter between the first of May (when the pastures were ready for grazing) & Michaelmas (September 29), when cattle were being driven closer to home before the weather turned for the worse.

You needed 2-3 acres of pasture per cow & spent the most of July cutting hay to feed them during the winter. Hay making is a long hot job, a hired man could expect to be paid a penny a day to scythe/cut the grass for hay, with a person behind (usually a woman) to spread the grass out in windrows to dry in the hot sun, then turned to dry on the other side. Then the hay would be piled into a stack or rick or loaded into a cart & stored in the hayloft in the barn. All of this in the damp “fine soft weather” of England & Northern Europe (moldy hay bad!). There was also the useful device called the “hay Barrack” that had a pallet floor & a roof that could be raised & lowered as the hay was added or used.

A word here on barns, hay & milking sheds: Barns were large structures that were usually raised by the entire town or village, and usually set that village above the rest since it had arrived. It was sometimes called the grange barn, since communal meetings, celebrations & courts were held there. More often, the barn was owned by—you guessed it—the local lord, Church, abbey or convent: as a matter of fact they were often referred to as “tithing barns” to hold the payment in kind that was owed the upper class for their protection. If a peasant or tenant was well-off they would have a hay shed, usually just a roof & some beams to hold it up & maybe another lean-to for a milking shed. A cow needed 1 lb. Of hay per 100 lbs. Of body weight to keep in good health, and 3 lbs. Feed or silage per 100 lbs. (fermented cane or woody herbage) is a good idea as well.

Mostly, the peasants would very often have their livestock live indoors with them to keep them safe (from weather, theft or predators) with the side benefit of added body heat during the winter cold. Often the cottage or hovel had a sort of gutter that divided it with the people on one side, near the hearth & the animals on the other side, near the door. Which door was what we now call “Dutch” style—large enough to get a cow in & divided into two horizontally, the lower part usually came up to a human's waist or chest & the upper part could be opened so you could check out the weather, or who the latest invaders were.

Yeah, I know—living with animals sounds so primitive, so smelly! And obviously just one or two cows or goats, not a whole herd! But keep in mind that cattle (which also includes goats & sheep) were often referred to as “movable wealth”, literally money on the hoof, it was often the way that a serf could hope to purchase his freedom from the land for himself & his family. Problem was, other people would like to get themselves some of that hooved wealth! Cattle raids were often a rite of passage for Scots & Irish youth so one kept a close eye on one's stock. The word in Gaelic for a cattle raid was “Tain” & the oldest epic poem in the Western world is the “Tain Bo Cuailgne” or the “Cattle Raid of Cooley” a pre-Christian Irish

tale of a queen's attempt to get a bull in her herd the equal of her husband's!

But on to milking! If one had one cow, you would halter your cow & tie it to a loop in your milking shed (if you were lucky enough to have one), grab your milking stool (one- to three-legged, or just a section of log) & pail (usually wood or leather only metal in later period if well-off) & start milking. After first warming your hands & giving the cow's udder a good washing with warm water—because if anything fell into the milk, you might as well feed it to the calf or pour it out for the pigs, because it would taste of whatever fell in. By the way, it was a good idea to hobble the cow to keep her from kicking over the bucket—and to secure the tail to the hobble as well, so that it did not slap you in the face or let anything drop into the milk pail. You had to be careful about what the cows ate too, as the flavor of say, onions can get in the milk! Ick.

One could take a well-behaved cow or goat or two to the marketplace or even from door to door and milk fresh milk to order!

If one had a proper milk shed or barn, you might have a stanchion or two set up near a manger or trough. A stanchion could look like a keyhole (circle atop a slot) the cow would put her head through the circle part in order to get to the feed in the manger & her neck would be confined in the slot so that you could get on to the milking. A milk cow was given 1 lb. Of grain for every 3 lbs. Of milk it produced usually 4 gallons a day with a gallon weighing in at 8 lbs. Each.

We had 10 cows on the farm/ranch where I grew up & learned to milk by hand—what you are doing is squeezing milk out of the cows udder through the 4 teats each cow (or goat or sheep) has. This requires a sort of top down tightening of each finger to “draw” the milk out of each teat. This was usually a job done by women, since men tended to be too rough with the squeezing causing the cow to refuse to let down their milk or literally kick up a fuss! Repeat for the other 2 teats (four per udder) & this was done at least twice a day

Once a pail was full, the milk would be stored in the dairy room or spring house (a spring house is built over an icy cold spring to keep things cool) to cool or might be sold right away as fresh warm milk. Or, if butter was to be made, it would be put in a cool room so that the cream could rise to the top (takes 12 to 24 hours) & skimmed to make butter. It should be noted that butter was usually a cool-weather product when sold at market, in warmer months, butter can melt or turn rancid. This is why ghee is used in India, as this is butter that has been further processed by melting so the excess water can be removed & is used almost like an oil for cooking.

Sometimes special flat shallow bowls were used to let the cream rise, lovely glossy stuff, leaving behind bluish skim milk. Saucer-shaped skimmers with perforations to let the milk drip back into the bowl were used to collect the cream as well.

When enough cream was collected—takes about 1 Cup of cream to make ½ cup butter which means that it takes 4 cups of cream to make 1 pound of butter. It is thought that the first butter was created when a leather bag of milk was put on a horse & taken for a ride, & then the globules of butter were tasted & found really good! What happens to the rest of the cream? It becomes buttermilk, which is great for baking, this is why buttermilk pancakes & biscuits are so fluffy, it is from the mildly fermented buttermilk providing loft.

It should be mentioned at this point that I am mainly talking about cow's cream or butter, sheep & goat's milk is naturally homogenized—meaning that the cream molecules are small & well distributed in the milk you need to wait longer for the cream to rise or a special separator to get enough cream to make butter—difficult but not impossible. I am given to understand that this is true of camel's milk as well, but water buffaloes or Yak milk can make butter, & that Tibetans value well-aged butter (years old in some cases), they especially like to melt it into their tea, giving them a boost of energy to climb those mountains. And the very idea of milking a mare makes my head hurt. Not going there.

So we have our cream, we need to churn it into butter; it could be put into a small wooden barrel or leather bag (metal can impart an unwanted taste to milk) & taken for a ride or hung from a tree or beam & shaken until the butter forms or passed from hand to hand while shaken by the children (keeps them out of trouble & makes them work for their food). What we think of as an upright butter churn was originally meant to transport the milk to market, but the addition of the dasher or plunger made the butter come quicker. Still enough time to do a butter song like “Come butter/Come butter/Come/Johnny waits by the gate/for his butter cake!” a rhyme that first saw print in 1615, but probably much older!

One can also use a whisk or paddles to beat the cream first to whipped cream, then to butter once the fat separates from the watery buttermilk when they clump together, all while keeping the cream at about 60o still takes at least 15 minutes for the butter to form. The buttermilk is drained off, then the butter is washed in cold water, until the water runs clear. Paddles are used to work out the buttermilk & shape the butter, after which 1/4-1/2 tsp. Salt is worked into the butter to preserve it (unsalted butter spoils faster). Then the butter can be shaped—a butter mold or press was a housewife's prized possession, indicating that the butter was her own make—or just pats (slapped into shape with the wooden paddles), wrapped & stored in the cold room still room or spring house. Often butter & egg money was how a woman could make her own money to get those things she needed, or special gifts for her loved ones. In some countries it was a given that the widow or daughter would inherit the milk beasts while the male heirs would get the oxen or other beasts of burden. Side note here, oxen are not a separate breed of cattle, they are steers that have been trained to draw a plow or cart—become a beast of burden (a steer is a bull calf that has been neutered, as bulls are testy & uncertain of temper!).

Sometimes butter was even sculpted into “subtleties” edible statues or images made for special occasions like the image of a saint for that saint's feast day or a bride on her wedding day. And butter makes everything taste better!

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This is the October 2018 issue number 264 of The Aerie, a publication of the Shire of Cum an Iolair of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (SCA, Inc.). The Aerie is available from the Chronicler. It is not a corporate publication of the SCA, Inc. and does not delineate SCA policies. Copyright 2018 Society for Creative Anachronism.

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