

Brewers' Guild Newsletter



Twelfth Night
N. S. XXXV



Brewers' Guild Ranking System

DEFINITIONS:

Style - beer, wine, mead, cordial, or non-alcoholic beverage.

Public Service Work - teaching a workshop, submitting articles or art to newsletters, holding a contest or tasting, etc.

Proficiency - competency in a style, as judged by fellow brewers from a sampling of at least four different brews.

RANKINGS:

Apprentice - Anyone who wants to play and participate in the Brewers' Guild activities. (Is entitled to wear the Guild badge on a green field.)

Journeyman - Someone who is proficient in at least one style of brewing and has performed at least one public service work. (Is entitled to wear the Guild badge on a blue field.)

Craftsman - Someone who is proficient in at least two styles of brewing, and had performed at least three public service works. (Is entitled to wear the Guild badge on a red field.)

Master Brewer - To achieve this rank you must have attained the previous rank of Craftsman, be nominated by your fellow Craftsmen, and be approved by the other Master Brewers. (Is entitled to wear the Guild badge on a purple field.)

All members of the Guild are encouraged to donate bottles of their beverages to the Guild for use as "taxes" given to the reigning Royalty during court presentations. Brewers outside of the central Kingdom, or in the more distant regions of the Marches, may achieve awards up through Craftsman by participating in their local events. Such individuals should write to the Guild Master to inform him or her of their level of participation.

The Guild badge is as follows: "Fieldless, a laurel leaf Vert on a tun Or". The tun, as generally depicted, is a wooden barrel.

The Kingdom Brewer's Guild newsletter is an unofficial publication and is printed and published through donations and unofficial subscriptions. It is published at no cost to the Brewers' Guild or the SCA. Members who would like to have a newsletter mailed to their home (vice hoping to pick up a spare copy during Kingdom events) are welcome to donate \$ 5.00 per year to the Guild Chronicler. Both stamps and suitable coins of the realm will be gleefully accepted!

Editor's note:

The first article in this issue pertains to the new SCA policies regarding alcohol and our insurance. Please read it and contact Crystal or myself if you have any questions. Thank you! Duncan

Alcohol and the SCA

At October Crown, our Kingdom Seneschal (Duncan Vittrarius) informed the assembled seneschals and myself of a new SCA policy that was being implemented immediately. This policy stems from a combination of insurance policy changes, several unfortunate alcohol-related incidents both inside the SCA in the mundane world, and the BOD's necessary response to those situations.

How It All Started

Our insurance company became alarmed last Spring at the "appalling" number of references they found in the SCA's various newsletters to drinking, drunken behavior, availability of alcohol, and usage of alcohol at events. So the insurance company recently set forth the "five deadly sins" for which the SCA *is not covered* by their insurance policy.

The Five Deadly Sins

The **servicing, selling, distribution, furnishing, or manufacturing** of alcohol at an SCA event or function is specifically not covered by our insurance. Period. What this means is that any liability for injuries, accidents, misunderstandings, lawsuits, etc., will fall directly upon the head of the individual(s) who do not comply with the above prohibitions. Alcohol may not be formally or officially connected in any way to the SCA or its officers. And no SCA money may ever be used to purchase alcohol, such as to buy a keg for a party, bid on a cordial at an auction, or buy a bottle of wine for a gift.

The Impact and Meaning

After a prolonged discussion with Duncan Vittrarius on this matter, and following his own discussions with the corporation, the impact of this new SCA policy appears to be minimal since nearly all Kingdom of the West activities are already in compliance with this policy.

Serving Alcohol: while individuals may still serve alcohol at an SCA event (providing they and their guests are of legal drinking age *and* it is at a "wet" site), alcohol may not be a formal or advertised part of the event. For example, advertising a kegger in the newsletter or site handouts is prohibited (we never did it anyway...), but a household may still have a keg at their evening feast if they wish.

Selling Alcohol: alcohol may not be sold at an SCA event for any reason. This includes the sale of alcoholic beverages at a fund-raising auction or at a tavern. Again, this does not appear to be much of a change from previous policies, although our members will need to be extra careful that any bottles they donate to such activities are clean/dry or contain only non-alcoholic beverages.

Distributing Alcohol: this is similar to the two above prohibitions, and further outlines that alcohol may never be provided by the SCA (its officers, events, and/or money) for any reason. This does not prohibit individual members from doing so as long as they remain in compliance with all other local, state, and Federal regulations regarding alcohol.

Furnishing Alcohol: how many times can it be said, and in how many ways? Never, *nyet*, *nada*, etc. But individual members may still provide alcohol to other individuals of legal drinking age when at a site that is “wet” and they are not an officer of the SCA (e.g.: sitting royalty, a current seneschal, etc.) *and* engaged in their official duties (e.g.: working at the time). These same officers may also retire to their pavilions at the end of their busy day and indulge in the same pleasures as the rest of us. But under no circumstances may alcohol be a part of their official functions.

Manufacturing Alcohol: brewers may still conduct demonstrations of ancient or modern brewing techniques such as classes in mead making, cordial making, or brewing. They may also include a demonstration on how to “pitch” the correct type and amount of yeast. But it stops there! If a batch of wort (unfermented beer) has yeast added to it, after a lag period of one to two days alcohol begins to be produced by the yeast. So a carboy of demonstration ale, for example, may not be left at a week-long event for a demonstration tasting at the end of the week. That’s manufacturing and would be prohibited. But there is nothing to keep a brewer from taking that carboy home and returning a week later with a sample of the resulting brew for tasting.

So What About Presentations, Tastings and Competitions?

Actually, we are just fine on this subject, too. During presentations at court, for example, *individuals* are giving samples of their brewing art to *individuals* who happen to be sitting on the throne. Still OK... And at our Brewers’ Guild meetings *individuals* are bringing samples of their brewing art for tasting and evaluation by other *individuals* in the group. Still OK... of course, everybody needs to be of legal age when those samples include any type of alcoholic beverages. Same thing goes for competitions, and also for “arts & sciences” tables or demonstrations. Adults may still sample and/or taste alcoholic beverages during these demonstrations if they wish and the site is “wet”. Just be careful to not have the heralds shout “Get your free alcohol here!” or some other equally clueless statement...

Like I said in the beginning, I fail to see any real impact of this new policy on the Brewers' Guild or individual SCA members. We have been very careful to keep alcoholic beverages out of the hands of minors, and for many years the Kingdom's fiscal policies have already prohibited the use of SCA money for the purchase of alcohol. Be aware, be careful, and most of all *take action* if you should see another person violating the SCA's policy on alcohol. The last thing we ever want to see would be a total ban on alcohol at our events...

Annual Report for the Brewers' Guild - 1997

Lord Ursus of Warwick, my predecessor, used the funds raised in his term of office to purchase a portable propane stove for Guild use at events. Ursus and Lady Lydia Britannica organized and ran the annual Silent Auction at 12th Night 1997. Ursus, with the consent of those members present at the Brewers' Guild meeting at 12th night, intended to pass the office of Brewers' Guild Chancellor to me at March Crown. Their Gracious Majesties, Cybi and Victoria accepted the suit of the Guild and installed me in the office.

Highlights of Brewers' Guild Activities in 1997:

- * Newsletters, contests and meetings at all Kingdom level events.
- * The Mists Brewers' Guild, under the direction of Lord Peyre de Barat, has run contests at all Mists Coronets and Investitures.
- * Brewing track at A&S July 1997, classes taught by Lady Crystal of the Westermark *Teetotalers in the SCA , nonalcoholic beverages*; Lady Lydia Britannica *Beers of a Different Gruit*; Master Duncan Saxthorpe of Alnwick *Making Mead*; Lord Peyre de Barat *Beginning Beer*; Lady Mistress Anastasia Ivanovna *Cordial Making*; and Lady Crystal of the Westermark *Survey of Period Beverages*.
- * Hosted the A&S Pavilion at October Crown, including a period beer-making demonstration by Master Duncan Saxthorpe of Alnwick.
- * Hosted a table at A&S Exhibition 1997: Lord Peyre de Barat, the Mists Brewers' Guild Representative stayed with the table all day answering questions and being helpful.
- * Provided beverages for the feast presented by Mistress Siobhan Mave o'Roarke at A&S Exhibition.
- * Three new officers have volunteered, Lady Cassandra von Vorden, Oerthan Brewers' Guild Representative (mka Roxane Goergen 21-745 D Fig Street Elmendorf AFB AK 99506); Bjorn of Fallentree, Cynaguan Brewers' Guild Representative (aka Chris McFann 400 Kesner Ave., Sacramento, CA 95835); and Sean macAodhe wi-Conghaile, Deputy Cynaguan Brewers' Guild Representative (aka Geoff Engel

seanl@mail.cwo.com). Unfortunately, Lord Josef zum Murmeltier (aka Robert Hambrick) stepped down from the Cynaguan representative's office due to increasing parental responsibilities.

Unfinished business before the Brewers' Guild:

- * Most officers need deputies.
- * Our Chronicler, Duncan Saxthorpe of Alnwick is looking for a successor.
- * The Guild files do not contain a copy of our charter; a new copy needs to be obtained.
- * The 12th Night Silent Auction and Guild Hall display is in need of volunteers and donations.

Thank you for your time and interest in the activities of the Brewers' Guild. If you have any questions, or should the Crown have any need of Their Guild, please contact Crystal of the Westermark at xtal@rtfm.com or (650) 473-6443.

In service,
Crystal of the Westermark
(mka Crystal A. Isaac)

The Story of Gambrinus

Lecherous Dukes, drunken parties, infidelities, war, beer, bravery, treachery, and death on the field of honor... an SCA fable? Nope! The following is a true story from the 13th Century which spawned a legend based upon the accomplishments and foibles of its namesake. Many home and professional brewers have heard about a fabled character named *Gambrinus*, the supposed King of Beer, without whom we today would not be enjoying hopped beers. So who was Gambrinus, did he really exist, and what role did he have in the evolution of beer? As it turns out, the truth is far more fascinating and entertaining than the legend itself.

Jan Primus ("John I" in the Latin of his day) really existed and was the Duke of Brabant and Flanders during the latter half of the 13th Century. The region of Brabant and Flanders is the fertile and oft-contested lands now known as Belgium. Born in 1251 as the second son of Henry III, Duke of Brabant, and Alix de Bourgone, the daughter of Hugh IV, Duke of Burgundy, Jan (also the Flemish name for "John") was a member of the rich nobility and was raised in an aristocratic and very privileged fashion. Early in his life, Jan earned a reputation for being a fearless and bold knight, a superb fighter, and of being possessed with an abiding love of women. *All* women... Fortunately, Jan also possessed the

physical attractiveness, finances, and power necessary to fulfill his carnal desires.

The 13th century duchy of Flanders was both rich and prosperous. However, it often became embroiled in the intrigues of the rival powers of Germany, France, and England. Flanders was a trophy for political and military conquest and as such its ruling families were rarely ever bored! Also during this period the royal authority in Flanders was declining due to the increasing wealth and power of its cities. These changes were predominantly the result of the rapid industrialization of medieval cities. But this industrialization also produced an often violent class struggle between the *patricians* (merchants) and the *democrats* (craftsmen). At the same time the Church was losing its monopoly on brewing as the aristocracy granted their guilds (whose wealth was controlled by the nobility rather than the Church) an increasing authority to produce beer for the populace.

Jan was well-known for partying all night and, in particular, for drinking his beloved beer. He befriended and financially supported the brewers of Bruxelles (Brussels) and Leuven. His favors helped the brewing guilds increase their power and solidify their position in these very volatile and dangerous times. The brewers, in turn, welcomed Jan's visits where he would often stay into the early morning hours while sampling their beers and ales. Jan would also party, carouse, and (ahem) indulge his other passions right up until it was time to don his battle or tournament armor. He believed such activities helped prepare him for the rigors of battle and must have been correct since he had never been defeated in combat.

In 1267 Jan became John I, Duke of Brabant, upon the death of his older brother, Henry IV. *Jan Primus* somehow became Anglicized to *Gambrinus* over the centuries, although it is not believed that this name was ever used to describe John I during his lifetime. To solidify his position with France, in 1270 he married Margaret of France, the daughter of Louis IX. While nothing is found in the chronicles about what happened to Margaret, in 1271 Jan married Margaret, the daughter of Guy of Dampierre, the count of Flanders and Namur. (*This* Margaret fortunately survived to 1330, an old age by any standard!) From this marriage came John II, who became the next Duke of Brabant upon his father's death... but we'll get to that in a moment or two. While John I met his new royal and familial duties with both skill and daring, none of them apparently slowed down his prowess in the boudoir. Jan continued to leave a trail of cuckolded husbands, adulterous wives, and pretty babies in his wake. And, of course, his appetite for beer became even more legendary.

Jan frequently proved his qualities as a brave knight and good battle leader. Along with Adolph V, Duke of Berg, he roundly defeated the Archbishop

Siegfried of Cologne at the Battle of Worringen on July 7, 1288. This defeat stripped the Archbishop of his secular powers and allowed a new city, rivaling Cologne, to be built upon the Rhine: Düsseldorf. To further the rivalry, and compete against the kölsch ales brewed in Cologne, the guilds of Düsseldorf developed their own style of hopped ale, *altbier* or *alt*. They were very successful in their competition and today alt remains more popular world-wide than kölsch. John I may not have played a direct role in the development of alt, but without his decisive victory at Worringen the city of Düsseldorf probably would never have come into existence and the power of Cologne would have squashed any competitors for its kölsch.

Well, so what happened to John I, Duke of Brabant? It turns out that his extra-marital affairs eventually caught up with him, resulting in a final “youth and skill versus old age and treachery” battle. John’s undoing was the wife of a French knight named Valseneuve, whom he bedded with characteristic aplomb. However, Jan had not counted on the intervention of Valseneuve’s priest, who himself had performed “private spiritual counseling” of the fair lady. In a fit of jealousy the priest informed Valseneuve about Jan’s philandering with his wife. Valseneuve thus challenged Jan to settle the issue by combat and, of course, Jan accepted. He drank and partied all night and was in his typical fine shape the next morning. The ensuing combat was going poorly for the older French knight, who could not overcome Jan’s agility, strength, and skill. So in a moment of desperation, Valseneuve shouted to Jan “Does the chivalrous knight need a second man to fight me?” Jan was incredulous and turned to see who had dared to enter the field of combat. Of course, nobody was there and before Jan could turn around, Valseneuve delivered the *coup de grace*.

So Gambrinus, the legendary King of Beer, was really John I, Duke of Brabant and Flanders, a heroic and somewhat flawed character from the Middle Ages. And while Jan never played a direct role in the evolution of beer, his support of his brewers’ guilds and his skill in warfare allowed *alt* to be developed. Perhaps the ghost of *Jan Primus* will be seen in our midst during the next bardic circle... joining with us in a toast, singing songs, and enjoying the company of our women!

Duncan Saxthorpe of Alnwick

References

1. *Prost! The Story of German Beer*, Horst D. Dornbusch, Sirius Books, Boulder, CO; 1997.
2. *Larousse Dictionary of World History*, ed. Bruch P. Lenman, Bath Press, London, England; 1994.
3. *The New Oxford English Dictionary, 2nd Edition*, Clarendon Press, Oxford 1989.
4. Also, Duncan conducted an Internet search of perhaps 6 genealogy databases to obtain data on the

The Fall of the Roman Empire due to Lead Poisoning?

In recent years modern scientists have learned that one of the effects of the industrial abilities of ancient Rome was an unprecedented pollution of the environment with lead from their smelters. And by the final years of *Pax Romana* just about everything in and around Rome was definitely contaminated with lead! The Romans used lead for their aqueducts, household water pipes, pewter utensils (which back then contained a high percentage of lead), lead glazes on their pottery, and may have even flavored poor quality wines with lead oxide (which tastes pleasantly sweet).

Thus, one very possible reason for the decline in the ruling class of Rome may have been chronic lead poisoning. The more wealthy a Roman family was, the more lead-containing products they had in use. Combined with a program of deliberate inbreeding, perhaps they never really had a chance beyond a few generations? (*Another idle thought from Duncan.*)

(From the Chancellor of the West Kingdom Brewers' Guild:)

Twelfth Night Activities

I recently received a letter from one of the sub-autocrats for the coming 12th night. There will be an A&S/Guild Hall and the Brewers' Guild has been invited to join. I would like to have a display at the Guild Hall, similar to what was presented at the Arts and Sciences Exhibition.

I called the sub-autocrat for more information and here is what Isela di Bari said. The Guild Hall will be in the Blue room, on the third floor. The room will be open from 10 AM to 5:30 PM. They will set up tables and chairs for us. We can hang banners with masking tape only. We can set up the Silent Auction and a drop-off spot for the contest entries at our table. What we cannot have is drinkable samples at the table, darn! The Guild room is carpeted and the owners of the hall are very fussy about their carpet. Although it will not be necessary to have someone at the table all day, please consider spending any resting time you may need at the table to answer questions. Please mark your name on everything you bring to the display.

For the table in the Guild hall: I will bring several table cloths, a hand-out, some misc books and brewing tools, a bubbling fermentation vessel and (hopefully) a small hand-cart to move it all. I have the best of intentions to be in the Guild hall at 10 AM, so the table will be obvious when you get there.

We can have beverage samples in the dance room, however. (Dancing will be all day in the billiards room.) I will bring non-alcoholic beverages and a cooler (and roll of paper towels, please be kind to the dancers). As usual, I will DEMAND if you bring anything alcoholic, please schedule time to supervise its distribution, there has been a recent problem involving minors and alcohol we MUST be more careful (please read Master Duncan's article in this newsletter).

The Guild meetings are supposed to happen in the red room (where the Casbah will be in the evening). If my memory serves me well, the red room is also carpeted and we will therefore be unable to have beverages in there, as well. I am thinking we may have our meeting just after lunch in the dance room. I will provide more information as available. Please let me know if there is anytime you will be UNABLE to attend a meeting. I know the meeting will NOT be between First and Second Court, as I have another commitment then. I will have a sign at the Guild table and in the dance room saying when the meeting will be (my closest guess).

The Silent Auction!

As many of you have already heard rumors on the problems the SCA is currently having with insurance and alcohol; here's the final (I hope) outcome. The SCA and its officers cannot sell or furnish alcohol to anybody. However, most members of the Brewer's Guild are not officers of the Kingdom (for example I am not an Officer of the Kingdom, we're just a guild). The big point is we cannot auction alcohol to raise money. For the auction, please bring something *non-alcoholic* (such as soda, pickles, candy, baked goods) or perhaps a promissory certificate for your teaching time and *assistance* in making a batch of beer/mead/cider etc. The auctions are how we fund the newsletter. There will be bidder's sheets on the table, please fill one out for each item you bring and place the sheet(s) with the item(s) leave on the table. (Be sure to include your address, etc.)

Taxes!

Also please bring something for our Royal Taxes. There will be a box under the table for Taxes. Please make sure there is a label on your donation. People often won't drink mystery brew until too drunk to appreciate your work. If your labels came off in transport, there will be paper-and-tape or a works-on-glass pen at the table.

I know this has been a really long letter. Thank you for your patience and attention. If you have any questions, want to volunteer for something, or have any really good ideas, *please* write to me at xtal@rtfm.com or call before 9 PM 650-473-6443.

In service to the Kingdom,
Crystal of the Westermark, AoA, Chancellor of the West Kingdom Brewers' Guild

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

All Brewers are Invited to enter a great Mead Contest...

The Brewers' Guild is hosting a Mead "Brew-Off" contest at October Crown, A.S. XXXIV (1999 C.E.). The mead recipe is for the competition is taken from *Le Menagier de Paris* (The Goodman of Paris, circa 1395 C.E.). The following translation is by Janet Hinson, as reprinted in [A Collection of Medieval and Renaissance Cookbooks: First Compiled by Duke Cariadoc of the Bow and The Duchess Diana Alena. Fifth Edition \(1992\) Volume Two, published privately.](#)

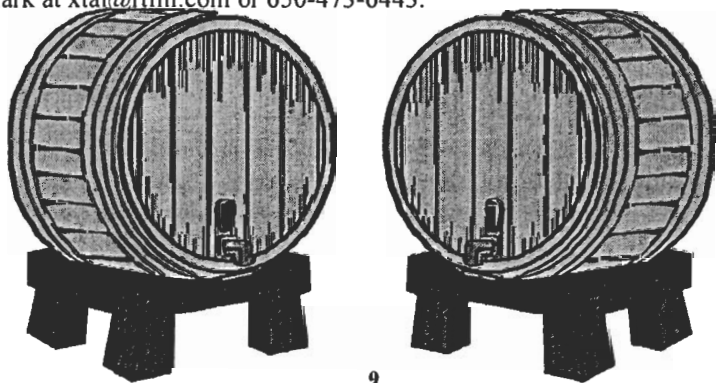
(Page M38-39 Beverages for Invalids)

"Bouchet. To make six sixths of bouchet, take six pints of fine sweet honey, and put it in a cauldron on the fire and boil it, and stir continually until it starts to grow, and when you see that it is producing bubbles like small globules which burst, and as they burst emit a little smoke which is sort of dark: and then stir, and then add seven sixths of water and boil until it reduces to six sixths again, and keep stirring. And then put it in a tub to cool until it is just warm; and then strain through a cloth bag, and then put it in a cask and add one chopine (half liter) of beer-yeast, for it is this which makes it the most piquant, (and if you use bread yeast, however much you like the taste, the colour will be insipid,) and cover it well and warmly to work. And if you want to make it very good, add an ounce of ginger, long pepper, grains of Paradise and cloves in equal amounts, except for the cloves of which there should be less, and put them in a cloth bag and throw in. And after two or three days, if the bouchet smells spicy enough and is strong enough, take out the spice-bag and squeeze it and put it in the next barrel you make. And thus you will be able to use the same spices three or four times.

Item. Another Bouchet kept for four years, and perhaps you could make a whole batch more or less at one time if you wished. Combine three parts water and one part honey, boil and skim until it reduces to a tenth, and then throw in a vessel; then refill your pot and do the same again, until you have enough; then let it cool and complete your batch: your bouchet will emit something like must which works. If you can, keep it continually full so that it can emit, and after six weeks or a month you must draw off the bouchet as far as the lees and put it in a copper tub or other container, then stave in the vessel where it stands, remove the lees, scald, wash, replace the staves and fill it with what you have left, and keep; and do not warm it up if it broached. And have four and half ounces of finely powdered cinnamon and an ounce and half of cloves and one of grains beaten and placed in a cloth bag and hung by a cord from the stopper.

Note that the scum which is removed, for each pot of it take twelve pots of water, and boil together, and this will make a nice bouchet for the servants. Item, and skimming from honey can be used in the same proportions."

For the contest, please bring your written interpretation of this period recipe. Please include in your documentation: your name, ingredients used, and how you made the mead. If you have any questions, please contact the Brewers' Guild Chancellor, Crystal of the Westermark at xtal@rtfm.com or 650-473-6443.



Rose Soda (by Crystal of the Westermarck)

2½ ounces rose extract ½ lb. dried rosehips
5 lb sugar water to five gallons

Boil 1 gallon water and sugar together. Reduce heat and add rosehips; allow to simmer until the rosehips have given the solution a pleasant pink color. Skim out all the pieces of rosehips (strain if necessary). Put sugar solution in sanitized keg and pressurize to seal. Refrigerate the keg to 60 degrees F, repressurize to about 25 psi and gently shake or rock the keg for about 20 minutes to carbonate. Serve cold.

I got the idea for this soda from a rose syrup recipe on page 60 of The 'Libre de Diversis Medicinis' in the Thornton Manuscript (MS. Lincoln Cathedral, A.5.2). Edited by Margaret Sinclair Ogden, *Libre* is a medical text from circa early 1400 CE England. "*Take an vnce or twa of roses & sethe tham in water to the ij partis be sothen in. Than clene it thurgh clathe & do suger ther-to & sethe it to it be thikk as hony & vse as thu dose the tother.*"

My interpretation: Take an ounce or two of roses and seethe them in twice as much water until they are soft. The strain them through cloth and add sugar. Reduce it until it is the thickness of honey. The use it as you do the other (the honey?).

Another recipe for rose syrup that specifies its use as a beverage was found in An Anonymous Andalusian Cookbook of the 13th Century but I still think it tastes better cold.

"Syrup of Fresh Roses, and the Recipe for Making It

Take a ratt of fresh roses, after removing the dirt from them, and cover them with boiled water for a day and night, until the water cools and the roses fall apart in the water. Clean it and take the clean part of it and add to a ratt of sugar. Cook all this until it takes the form of a syrup. Drink an uqiya of this with two of hot water...."

Rosewater as a drink was not unheard of in the middle ages, and if a fermentable sugar was added as suggested in both the English and Arabic recipes, it would have been fermented by wild yeast (when dilute) and undergone some carbonation. I used extract instead of real rose petals because finding the necessary quantity of pesticide-free petals would have taken more time than I had to spare the week before the A&S Exhibition. If you can find enough fresh petals, remember to remove the white bit from the base of each petal before cooking. This will help reduce the bitterness of the petals.

Crystal of the Westermarck, AoA

***"God speed the plough and give us good ale now,
Be merry and glade, with good ale was this work
made..."*** (A carving found in the gallery of an old English church, near the English Channel...)

Spiced Ale

(Spiced Ale from Curye on Inglysch, redacted by Crystal of the Westermarck, AoA)

"205 *Clarry and Braggot.*

Take ... ounces canel & galinga, greyns de paris, and a lytel peper, & make poudur, & temper hit wyt god wyte wyne & the perte hony & ryne hit thorow a cloth. In the same manere of ale, but take viii galones of god stale ale to on galon of hony ipurede clene, & boyle iii galonus of ale wyt tho hony. Or hit bygyne to boyle, do in thi spicery; set hyt fro tho fyre & styre hit soft & let hit cole, & ryne hit thorow a wyde bultyng cloth. Do hit in a clene vessel to tho ale, & gode berme aboute, & hange in a cloute the spyceri in the ale & kouore hit wel, & wene hit is fourtene nyte holde, drynke thereof. Amen."

[Heiatt, Constance and Butler, Sharon. editors and translators. Curye on Inglysch: English Culinary Manuscripts of the Fourteenth Century (Including the Forme of Cury). Published for the Early English Text Society by Oxford University Press. London, England 1985 ISBN 0-19-722409. Page 145, IV: Forme of Cury.]

My interpretation:

Take several ounces of canel (a type of cinnamon), galingale (a root related to ginger), grains of paradise (megulunta pepper), and some (black) pepper and make a powder of them. Soak the spices in good white wine and add a portion of honey. Run it through a cloth (or jelly bag) to filter. In the same manner you can make ale, but take 8 gallons of good old ale to one gallon of clarified honey. Boil three gallons of the ale with the honey. When it begins to boil, put the bag of spices in it. Take it off the heat and allow to cool, stirring gently. Then filter the braggot through fine cloth. Keep it in a clean vessel with the remainder of the ale and clean yeast. Let the bag (or just knot the spices into the cloth used to filter them) of spices stay in the ale and cover it carefully. When it is two weeks old you may drink it. Amen, indeed.

To make this ale, I first thought what a medieval brewer might put into "stale ale." After reading Lord Corwin of Darkwater's homepage on brewing with period recipes and flipping through Cindy Renfrow's "A Sip Through Time" I made the following unhopped ale with more oats than I would normally use for beer. The mixture of grains is intended to replicate the medieval practice of using what was available. I decided about 2 weeks would be long enough for the yeast to settle and make the ale stop bubbling. Most medieval pre-hops ale recipes say the ale is ready to drink in 3-5 days (or two weeks at the most), so two weeks might have been "stale ale" by medieval standards.

Stale Ale (step 1)

3.45 pounds Alexander's Wheat [60%] Malt Extract

3.25 pounds Alexander's Amber Malt Extract

2 pounds rolled oats

1 pound victory malt

Wyeast 1084 Irish ale yeast

Water to about 4 gallons

Following a normal beer making process I boiled the malt, steamed the grains and pour everything into a well sanitized fermenter. I let the wort sit there for two weeks, then transferred to secondary.



Bakers and brewers often worked together, and required many of the same resources.

Spiced and Sweetened Ale (step 2)

about 6 pounds of raspberry honey

½ ounce canel ½ ounce grains of paradise

½ ounce galingale ⅓ ounce ground pepper

The next day I clarified the honey (bought at Uncle Rod's Homebrew supplies in San Jose) in a quart of water and added it to the wort. According to the recipe I should have boiled the honey in some of the wort, but I was worried I was not going to have a sufficient quantity of ale at the end, so I added a little extra water.

Canel (a different type of cinnamon) and grains of paradise (megulanta pepper) were bought from a Peppers' Guild at 3YC. Galingale can be found at some Indian grocery stores, look under the section of Avyrueic medicine. For pepper I used pre-ground black pepper, next time I think I will use whole peppercorns, or a quarter ounce of long pepper. I ground the spices in a blender and put all of it in the tightest weave grain bag I have (I wanted as little dust to get

into the beer as possible). I tried to get the grain bag to sink in the wort, but it eventually floated up like a balloon. I should have boiled the bag in water and then added all of that to the ale to prevent the wild yeast from making a balloon out of my grain bag. I used a grain bag so as not to need to filter the ale later.

The wort sat for two weeks then I drew off a sample bottle and took it to the Brewer's Guild meeting at October Crown. Everybody liked it, so I removed the bag of spices when I got home. The remainder of the Spiced Ale was served at Dame Siobhan Maedhbh O'Roarke's dinner at the Kingdom Arts Exposition.

“To the noble members of this fine guild: May your holiday season be glorious, your Wassail glass always be full, and your life forever enriched by many good friends!” Duncan...

End of the Year Accounting:

The newsletter's funds started 1977 with \$ 325, to which was added \$ 155 in donations and subscriptions, and from which \$ 33.95 paid for postage. (Duncan and Camilla have contributed the photocopying expenses for each issue in 1997, a total of \$ 195.51.) The newsletter fund now contains \$ 446.05 (prior to the December mailing). *Duncan*

Brewers' Guild Leadership

Head of the Guild

Crystal of the Westermark (Crystal A. Isaac)

Private
No peeking

Private
No peeking

Cynaguan Representative

Bjorn of Fallentree (Chris McFann)

Private
No peeking

...nto, CA 95835

... hint!

...onghaile (Geoff Engle)

Mists Representative

Peyre de Barat (Leon Baradat)

Private
No peeking

...ard CA 94541

Oerthan Representative

Cassandra von Vorden (Rosane Goergen)

21-745 D Fig Street, Elmendorf AFB, AK 99506

(I'd publish a phone number if I had it... hint!)

Chronicler for the Guild

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No phone calls after 9 PM, please...

This newsletter is an unofficial publication prepared by and for the members of the Brewers' Guild of the Kingdom of the West. The articles, opinions, and recipes published herein are strictly the responsibility of their authors and not of the SCA or the Kingdom of the West. (Now that the lawyers are happy... relax and have a home brew!)