

# WEST KINGDOM BREWERS' GUILD NEWSLETTER



## OCTOBER CROWN A.S. XXXV

# BREWING NEWS



Greetings All! Well, this is the second edition of our "new format" newsletter and the first edition of our new "newsier" newsletter. If you are brewing, researching, traveling, tasting brews , judging competitions, participating in competitions, reading books, teaching classes, or just about anything else pertaining to brewing, we want to hear about it! Drop me a note and I'll add your news to the collection! Remember that I need to have this sort of information in order for you to be able to "advance" in your guild ranking! Besides, it can be inspirational for others to see things happening in the guild.

This summer was indeed a busy one for Henry and I. We made our annual pilgrimage to **Pennsic** in our RV – complete with two three gallon kegs of Misty Stout, two three gallon kegs of Brown Ale, and two tasting classes worth of bottled beers, ales, and lambics. Two of the kegs were for the Known World Royalty Dinner and two were for our camping household's consumption. (Yum!) It is amazing how much all of that weighted!

Henry taught a total of seven brewing classes at Pennsic this year: two sessions of Gruitd Ales, two sessions of English Abbey Brewing (brewing utensils and methods), one Period Beer Styles, and two panel sessions entitled **"To Boil or not to Boil" (gruiling techniques)**. He also aided his apprentice-brother in an all-day, all-grain brewing session – and yes we drank the beer at the end of Pennsic –it was not clear, but it was definitely yummy!

Due to a combination of business and car-trouble we didn't get home until September 4<sup>th</sup> – just in time to pull ourselves together for the **Darkwood A&S on September 9 and 10<sup>th</sup>**. I taught Cider, Cyser and Perry and Henry recapped his Gruitd Ales and Brewing Utensils and Methods classes. Kat (Caitlin O'Byrne) taught cordials. A good time was had by all and the class attendance was pretty impressive.

Eirny Thorvaldsdottir  
Brewers Guild Chronicler



Fall Collegium, - October 14-15 – Stockton  
There aren't currently any brewing classes listed at Collegium this year do we want to change that?  
Check out  
<http://www.santiagosmagic.com/Collegium/Fall2000Grid.htm>



Jan Kees, has been working hard on a redaction project and promises to try to have it ready for the 12<sup>th</sup> Night newsletter! – we'll be waiting!!.....

Jan was, however, generous enough to share this recipe for your brewing pleasure.

## Dim Witted Braggot

A Semi-Period Belgian Brew by Jan Kees

This recipe combines two styles of ale (Wit and Dunkelweiss) with a Braggot. Both of the ale styles have wheat included in the mash, as well as the usual malted barley. The addition of wheat makes the ale a bit lighter, drier, and slightly astringent - perfect for after a hot summer tourney.

### Now We're Styling

A Braggot is a style that starts out as an ale, but adds honey to the wort, thereby getting a new name. See what people will do when deprived of television?

A Wit (White) ale is a wheat ale with spices added - usually Coriander and Bitter Orange. It's called a white ale because it never clears. It remains cloudy due to the wheat in the mix.

A Dunkelweiss (Dark Wheat) uses wheat that has been toasted before mashing. The toasting darkens the grains and changes the flavor profile. It's also probably a bit cloudy, but it's too dark to notice.

All the hops used in this recipe were aged for over a year without refrigeration, in the Belgian period style. Why did Belgians age their hops without refrigeration? No, it's not because they had no television - it's because they had no refrigerators.

### Semi-True Confessions

The recipe uses Crystal malt and Dextrin, which add unfermentable sugars to the mash. The yeast cannot convert these sugars to alcohol, so they remain to sweeten the beer, counteracting some of the wheat astringency. They also add a little body to the ale. Adding unfermentable sweeteners to one's brew probably is period, but they wouldn't say it that way. They'd probably say, "Add some of this to your ale, lest it be too dry." Dextrin sure isn't period, and Crystal malt probably isn't either.

Ingredients for a 5 gallon batch

5 lbs. Dark Wheat Extract

2 1/2 lbs. Honey

1/4 lb. Crystal Malt (50 Lovibond for you beer geeks)

1 3/4 oz. Coriander

2 oz. Dextrin

1+ oz. Bitter Orange Peel

1+ oz. Hallertau Hops (originally 4.8 % Alpha Acids)

1 oz. Saaz Hops (originally 3.6 % Alpha Acids)

1 tsp. Irish Moss

White Labs Belgian Wit II Yeast (WLP410)

Process

The day before you're going to brew, culture the yeast in 1 quart of water with a few teaspoons of the extract. Store this in a warm place. I use the top of the stove near (but not on) a pilot light.

Put the crystal malt in a grain bag, and place it in 4 gallons of cold water. Heat it to boiling and remove the malt. Add the extract, honey and Hallertau hops. Boil for 45 minutes.

Add half of the coriander, half of the Saaz hops, the dextrin, and the Irish Moss. Boil for 10 minutes.

Add the rest of the coriander and Saaz hops, and all of the orange peel. Boil for 5 minutes.

Remove from the heat and chill to 70 degrees. Top off with water to the 5 gallon mark. Don't forget to pitch the yeast.

### Epilog

My original gravity was 1.11. As usual, I forgot to measure the final gravity (too much TV). I brewed this on June 4th and served it at June Crown on June 24th, where they drank every bit of it in one night (grumble).

Editors note: I was lucky enough to taste this and it was definitely worth going back for seconds. It is a particularly nice some brew - very refreshing.

Crystal has been in the throws of moving - which makes brewing pretty impossible, but she did share an article.

## Rose and Cardamom Flavored Beverages

by Crystal of the Westermark

This is somewhat speculative, as it put together three sources and several different recipes (over two centuries, eek!) to make two drinks.

In The Arabian Nights, translated by Husain Haddawy, based on the text of the 14th-century Syrian manuscript edited by Muhsin Mahdi (ISBN 0-679-41338-3) several drinks are mentioned, wine being the most common. However, nonalcoholic beverages are mentioned and one is described as a sweet julep flavored with rosewater and cardamom. I tried to reproduce this drink by taking a pint of clarified honey (clarified honey is frequently mentioned in the Arabic medical texts of 900-1200CE), three pints of rosewater (rosewater is available but expensive at Indian grocery stores. I recommend purchasing rose extract and diluting it to a taste you enjoy, about 1 teaspoon per gallon works) and a teaspoon of desiccated cardamom seeds. The seeds were crushed by hand in a mortar and pestle. The resulting drink was quite tasty. Next time I will store the cardamom in the honey for a few days before making the julep. In An Anonymous Andalusian Cookbook of the 13th Century there is a similar julep recipe that omits the cardamom. I suspect this julep, like sekanjabins, was a general recipe and spices were added depending on the taste of the household, availability or region. In addition to a julep (sweet with spices) I have also make a sekanjabin (sweet/vinegar with spices) of the rose and cardamom.

### Julep

4 cups white sugar (or 3.5 cups clarified honey)

2 cups rose water

1 tsp desiccated cardamom seeds, crushed

Dissolve sugar in rose water, heat until clear. Remove from heat and add cardamom. Allow the spices to remain in the mixture until cool, (perhaps an hour). Strain and bottle into very clean containers.

To drink, dilute about one part julep to four parts water. Serve over ice.

#### Sekanjabin

4 cups white sugar (or 3.5 cups clarified honey)

2 cups white wine vinegar

spices (1 tsp crushed desiccated cardamom seeds and all the carefully washed, pesticide free rose petals\* you can fit into the pot.)

Dissolve sugar in vinegar, heat until clear. Reduce heat, allow the mixture to simmer (steaming but not bubbling) for 30 minutes. Remove from heat and add spices. Allow the spices to remain in the mixture until cool, (perhaps an hour). Strain and bottle into very clean containers.

To drink, dilute about one part sekanjabin to five parts water. Sekanjabin can be drunk hot or cold. Other medieval recipes for sekanjabin call for sea salt, making it a good drink for hot days. Sekanjabin was used as a way to make medicinal herbs palatable, so you can replace the mint with other herbs for different flavors. Using honey will make the resulting beverage similar to oxymel, a honey and vinegar drink also referred to by the Arabic authors. Some people replace the vinegar with lemon juice, but the shelflife of a lemon sekanjabin is about two months, whereas the vinegar seems to keep indefinitely.

\*I don't have access to safe rose petals very often. (I only really trust my mom to grow roses organically. Most people don't realize that the fertilizers targeted for roses renders them inedible < sigh >.) As a substitute, I use rose concentrate. If I need color, I add some rose hips to give it a pinkish pink. This has the added bonus of making it visually distinct from the mint and ginger sekanjabins. A laurel in my vicinity gives me "rations" of shit about this substitution every time he notices it, but until I have a yard and some old roses there is not much I can do.

There is slightly better documentation, from actual cookery/medicine books, but nothing that quite matches the description in the Arabian Nights. Documentation for a sugar/honey and vinegar beverage, also roses:

Maimonides, Moses (1135-1204 CE). *Maqalah Fi Bayan Ba'D Al-A'Rad Wa-A;-Jawab 'Anha Ma'Amar Ha-Hakra'Ah*. edited and translated by Leibowitz, JO and Marcus, S. *Moses Maimonides on the Causes and Symptoms (Maqalah Fi Bayan Ba'D Al-A'Rad Wa-A;-Jawab 'Anha Ma'Amar Ha-Hakra'Ah [and] De Causis Accidentium)*. Published by University of California Press, Berkeley, CA. 1974. ISBN 0-520-02224-6 LCCCN 71-187873  
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"Galen, and those who preceded him among the physicians, mentioned a drink which they name in their language hydromel; they used to prepare it from honey and thin white wine, as they used to prepare oxymel from vinegar and honey. But their successors, as they prepared

oxymel from sugar and vinegar, prepared hydromel from sugar and wine. This is a most excellent drink, beneficial in strengthening the stomach and the heart....The description of its preparation is: take five Egyptian pounds of sugar, cook it as syrups are cooked, removing its foam, until it acquires a good consistency. Then cast into it one Egyptian pound of good wine, and thicken it into a syrup of the consistency of syrup of rose. This Servant has mentioned this syrup along with the foods only because it resembles them...."

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"...If there is thirst, drinking oxymel of roses is preferable to drinking hydromel...drinking oxymel of currants is preferable."And documentation for sekanjabins, juleps and roses (I believe in the food sections of the Andalusian Cookbook there are mentions of cardamom, but I do not have it with me right now):

Anonymous. *An Anonymous Andalusian Cookbook of the 13th Century. A Complete Translation by Charles Perry of the Arabic Edition of Ambrosio Huici Miranda with the assistance of an English Translation by Elise Flemming, Stephen Bloch, Habib ibn Al-Andalusi and Janet Hinson of the Spanish Translation by Ambrosio Huici Miranda*. ©1992 by Charles Perry. Reprinted in *A Collection of Medieval and Renaissance Cookery Books* by Friedman, David (Sir Cariadoc of the Bow) Published privately.

pages A-71 to A-78

"The Recipe for Making a Syrup of Julep

**Take five ratls of aromatic rosewater, and two and a half of sugar, cook all this until it takes the consistency of syrups. Drink two uqiya of this with three of hot water...."**

"Syrup of Fresh Roses, and the Recipe for Making It Take a ratl 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 ratl of sugar. Cook all this until it takes the form of a syrup. Drink an uqiya of this with two of hot water...."

"Syrup of Simple Sekanjabin (Oxymel)

Take a ratl of strong vinegar and add it to two ratls of sugar, and cook all this until it takes the form of a syrup. Drink an uqiya of this with three of hot water when fasting ... make it with six uqiya of sour vinegar for a ratl of honey and it is admirable."

And much too-early documentation for cardamom in a beverage:

Al-Kindi, Abu Yusuf Ya'qub ibn Isaq (ca. 800-870 CE). *The Medical Formulary or Agrabadhin of Al-Kindi: Translated with a Study of its Materia Medica*. Translated by Levey, Martin. Published by The University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, WI. 1966. LCCCN 65-12105

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"109. Sweet, Pleasant, good, delicious honey syrup.

Pure water of the oriental tamarisk seed is cooked until it is diminished by a fourth. Then the best honey and crystalline sugar, of each one a part equal to half of the water which had been cooked, is thrown on it, its froth is removed. In it is put a linen bag which contains one ratl each of cardamom, Chinese cinnamon, walnut, and ginger, and one daniq each of honey and sugar. [The mixture] is boiled until a syrup remains. The bag is squeezed, kneaded in it, and then taken out. The mixture is put into flasks and the tops stoppered. It is drunk like



oxymel. If instead of the aromatics, walnuts and white sandalwood are used according to the mentioned weight, then it is a good pleasant syrup, God willing."

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## 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 tun palewise Or charged with a laurel leaf vert.". 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!

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## Brewers' Guild Leadership

**Head of the Guild**  
Thea of Midvale

Private  
No peeking

### **Cynaguan Representative**

Cassandra von Vorden (Rosane Goergen)

Private  
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### **Mists Representative**

William of the West Merlands (Craig Carter)

Sh San Francisco, CA

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### **Oerthan Representative**

### **Chronicler for the Guild**

Eirny Thorvaldsdottir

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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!)