



The Newsletter of the Northern Marches, serving Allyshia, Ravenshore and Wuduholt be Secq

From The Editor

CATRIONA MACRATH

Welcome to the special Wodewose edition of The Strand!

The Wodewose is near and dear to us in the Northern Marches, and as such it is only fitting we dedicate an issue to him.

In other news, winter rains have made travel to and from Allyshia somewhat challenging. The weather has also rendered some events in other parts of the kingdom more adventurous than planned. Wherever you go this season, travel safely!

You may have also noticed a change in format with this issue - this is to comply with Society regulations for newsletters. This means more room for Master Iain's amazing cover art!



Calendar of Events

May 5 Beltane Coronation

May TBA Baronial Business Meeting

June 16-18 Games Day, Wuduholt be Secq

June 24 June Crown

July 4-9 West/AnTir War

Ongoing events

Heavy Fighter Practice - Tuesdays 6:30pm

Rapier Practice - Sundays 12:30pm

Apothecary Guild - 3rd Wednesday 6:30pm

Check the official calendar at allyshia.westkingdom.org/calendar for details.

From Their Excellencies

ULFAR INN SVARTI ÞORISSON

AND MEGAN PLANTEROSE

Unto The Populace of Allyshia Do Ulfar and Megan Send Joyous Greetings,

We are honored to step up as your new baron and baroness. We wish Caiomhe and Aylwin a time of jubilant relaxation as their year of service ends.

Our plan is to have a year of fun; a year filled with creativity. His Excellency challenges you to leave the comfort of the familiar and attempt a craft or activity that is new to you. We anticipate seeing the virtuous feats of the mighty Allyshian populace.

Heron's Pool brought an excellent display of honor and prowess (and humor) on the field. Her Excellency selected as her champions Seamus McMorro and Thomas.

The weekend before, His Excellency traveled to visit our neighbors to the South, for a weekend of tourney fighting and melees.

We look forward to Our reign and to serving those who dwell in (or whose hearts dwell in) Our bountiful homeland.

Long live the Barony of Allyshia!

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Cover art: Iain Gearr-Sheallach O'Maoilbhreanainn

Caring for Wood Feast Gear

By REINOLD HALDANE

Caring for wooden items is a fairly simple process. The biggest and most frequent reasons for wood bowls and cups to die are moisture and bacteria. Too much moisture in the wood can cause stress fractures in the grain, and bacteria can sit in the wood fibers, coming back out into food and making people sick. Luckily, there are just a few things to remember to do, or not to do, to prolong the life of your feast gear.

1. Make sure the surface is sealed. This means sealed with something that doesn't react to whatever is put into it. Bees wax and mineral oil only works on things that don't hold hot or warm liquids for a while, as the heat will reactivate them and they will seep out. If it's not sealed, then liquids will soak into the wood, giving bacteria a place to start. An oil varnish blend like Danish Oil will cure quickly and is nontoxic when finished.

2. Clean items immediately after use. They aren't as durable as ceramics, and things that stick to them can stick hard enough to pull up finish or wood fibers when they peel off

3. Dry items immediately after use. Soaking wood bowls and cups is a recipe for warps and cracks. No finish can hold up to prolonged soaking, and the moisture will find a way in.

4. No dish washers. The high heat and aggressive natures of these devices will kill wood items fast

5. Seal cracks immediately. Even with good care, the wood is a natural material that can crack over time. Seal the cracks to prevent further deterioration, not to mention preventing the bacteria from finding a way in. Danish Oil works well for this too.

6. Refinish from time to time. Wear and tear shows up faster on wood, and light surface scratches will go through the finish with repeated use, exposing the wood to moisture and bacteria. Every 6 months to a year, depending on how deep the scratches are, a thin coat of finish over the inside and out will rejuvenate the entire piece, plus it will keep the whole thing looking nice.

All in all, with only a little consideration, wood gear can last years and years, and look good while doing it.

The Houppelande, or How to Dress Like a Wodewose

By CATRIONA MACRATH

So, you admire the furry, woodland nature of the Wodewose, but you're not sufficiently hirsute to pull it off? Never fear, you can simulate the effect with the pinnacle of 14th century costume, the houppelande!



The Duke of Berry setting off on a trip, from "Les Petites Heures du Jean de Berry", c. 1385

To the untrained eye, the houppelande may appear to be a giant circle of cloth worn as a dress, or long tunic. Indeed, the difference between male and female versions of the garb are minimal, generally involving only the length of the body of the garment and whether it was belted at the waist or under the bust. Thursfield cites this as the last era during which men's and women's garb was fundamentally the same.(1)

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The garment itself was voluminous, demonstrating the wearer's ability to purchase copious amounts of fabric for the sole purpose of wafting about in it. The fashion appears to have originated in the Low Countries (Belgium, Luxembourg and The Netherlands), largely with the professional classes, and was often made of rich fabrics, such as velvet, and trimmed in fur.⁽²⁾ The edges of the garments were often dagged, resembling scallops, petals or leaves. When made of felted wool, very elaborate shapes could be cut without requiring tedious hemming or edge finishing. Some versions have ribbons of dagged fabric dangling from the shoulders, resembling a medieval ghillie suit.

The fabrics ranged from wools to luxurious brocades, and it seems like wearing 10-15 yards of fabric would definitely hinder your movement, but also keep you quite toasty during the Little Ice Age. Possibly also at camping events (although I recommend eschewing the train) - sort of like a medieval Snuggie. The system of pleating distributes the weight across the shoulders, so properly fitted, they can be quite comfortable.

Ready to make your own? Branwyn ferch Gwythyr has a nice comparison of several methods of construction on her website ⁽³⁾, including Mistress Cynthia du Pre Argent's version, which improves upon the circle-with-holes method promoted by many costume texts. Her complete post on this method can be found on her own site ⁽⁴⁾. An extant version from 1396 ⁽⁵⁾ drapes beautifully from the shoulders in front, lending credence to Mistress Cynthia's version (in the link above, and also at), but instead of the v-neck insert, is pleated across the neck in back. Regardless of neckline, the garment is a great way to show off acres of beautiful fabric and have a little fun making fussy edges.

Interested in a workshop this summer?

Contact me at [catriona.macrath\(at\)westkingdom.org](mailto:catriona.macrath@westkingdom.org). A little (okay, a lot) of green fabric, and some enthusiastic dagging, and you can Wodewose yourself like the fine fellow below.



The Green Man, "Les Heures de Charles d'Angoulême" (Latin 1173), late 15th c.

Notes:

⁽¹⁾ Sarah Thursfield, *The Medieval Tailor's Assistant*, 2nd Edition: Common Garments 1100-1480 (2015)

⁽²⁾ R. Turner Wilcox, *The Mode in Costume* (1974)

⁽³⁾ <http://deciduousdryad.blogspot.com/2013/05/houppelande-class.html>

⁽⁴⁾ http://www.virtue.to/articles/circle_houp.html

⁽⁵⁾ Tasha D. Kelley, detailed blog post on this garment at <http://cottesimple.com/garments/royal-grave-clothing-14th-century-bohemia/>



Brother Michael

BY HEATH THE WANDERER

Michael stared through the window. The rough stones of the sill framed rolling hills covered with green trees and grass. His tower stood high above the surrounding landscape, giving a bird's eye view of miles of English countryside. To Michael, this was a subtle form of torture.

Michael's keeper was not a cruel man. In fact, Michael had all the food and modern comforts any holy man could expect in the twelfth century. Of course, taking Holy Orders did have limitations on what luxuries could be afforded in the moral ledger, but Michael was aging, and many activities cherished by youth gave way to more cerebral pursuits in later years.

The tower was not an attempt to put Michael closer to God, as some rumors suggested. It was more of an exile from the world below, yet within view of the world outside. A dungeon is an overt punishment. A tower covertly removes a man while showing him what he has been removed from.

Voices at the door brought Michael back from the horizon. A bolt slid aside, hinges creaked, and a young man in robes entered the room. He carried a bulky sack over his shoulder.

"You must be stronger than you appear," said Michael.

"Yes, Brother," said the young man. "I suspect the fruits within have not matured past their attachment to the trees which bore them fruit. The weight of their yearning to reunite with their mother's makes each step upwards noticeably more difficult."

"Just fruits?"

"No, Brother. There is more than fruit. The meats, I believe are less inclined to be missing out on any earthly relationships. They feel more vengeful at being denied unity with their original form and thus struggle to many any endeavor I pursue a drudgery."

"Fruits and meats. Do the breads have any opinions?"

"No, Brother. The breads are silent on all fronts. I suspect that is because they are breads, but I have been told that the silent ones are often the most dangerous ones."

"Very keen of you to remember."

"On the brighter side of today's march, the inks and quills are eager to meet you, and thus have countered some of the weight borne out by the companion cargo."

Michael stood silent, studying the young man, then he realized his rudeness.

"Young man, please put that sack down. Your banter is quite refreshing, but I dare say you needn't do so while maintaining your burdened posture. What is your name?"

"Thank you, Brother. Call me Finny. I am new to the Order, but it was you who inspired me to join."

"Me? Now I must carry the burden of guilt for such nonsense?"

"Please, Brother. Forgive yourself. My life's path carried its own load that often brought me to my knees."

"Then, Brother Finny, have a seat and we shall unpack the supplies the world below has gifted unto me."

"I must unveil a deception, Brother Michael," said Finny.

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Brother Michael waited without any sign of surprise or judgement. He merely nodded for Finny to continue.

“The ink and quills, while they may be eager to greet you, did not, in any way, help with my journey.”

“I suspected as much. I have made that climb myself, and nothing in this material world will help raise our feet as we climb higher and higher.”

“My own eagerness gave me the fortitude.”

“Yes, yes. I am curious about that, but my belly is more insistent than my manners. We shall talk over vengeful meats and sorrowful fruits. Our judgements about the breads shall be in whispers.”

Awards and Honors

ELSA VON AUREC, SEALION PURSUIVANT

Given by Ulfar and Megan, Baron and Baroness at Herons Pool, April 22, 2017, A.S. LI

Dandelion Lord (baronial Heavy fighting Champion)-Thomas of Allyshia

Leaf du Jour-Catriona MacRath

Lotus Lord (Baronial Rapier Champion)-Seamus McMorrow

Order of the Red Thread-Signy Jolinardottir

Order of the Seashell-Evin of Allyshia

Pillar of Allyshia-Donnuban se Reid

Congratulations to All these fine gentles for their achievements and efforts! Hip Hip Huzzah!

Northern Marches Arts and Sciences

Save the date! Northern Marches A&S will be happening the weekend of August 11 in the Barony of Allyshia.

It's some ways off yet, but planning classes takes time. Last year's event was a big success, drawing folks from An Tir and central Kingdom. If you're interested in teaching a class at this year's Northern Marches A&S, please contact Signy Jólinnardóttir via Facebook or and1066@charter.com to get on our growing list of great instructors!

Also, if you have a class you'd like to see taught, let us know, and we'll see if someone is willing to teach it.

Got littles? We're working on setting up a Youth Point, and possibly also having a class or two suited to our future Laurels. Let us know if you're approved through the Kingdom process to work with youth, and if you have a class in mind, or just want to help distract little hands while parents attend classes.



This is the Spring (May) 2017 issue of The Strand, the official newsletter of the Barony of Allyshia. Allyshia is a branch of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. It is not a corporate publication of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc, and does not delineate SCA policies. This newsletter is available online at <http://www.allyshia.westkingdom.org>. Articles and artwork contained herein is reprinted by permission of the author/artist, and may be reproduced only with their permission. Submissions should be sent to catriona.macrath@allyshia.westkingdom.org.