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Shire of Al-Sahid Newsletter

# Scorpion Tales



Around the Shire

July Shire Meeting and Craft Days

Please note that this month the Shire meeting and Craft Day are on separate days. This month's Shire meeting will be **Sunday July 29** at 3:00 pm at the home of THL Caitlin.

*Construction on the 138 will not affect you if you come this way: From Hesperia take Main St. west, or from points north (VV and Apple Valley) head south on the 15 and get off at Main St. Go west. Main becomes Phelan Rd. Take Phelan Rd. through Phelan and then turn left on Beekley. Turn left on the 138. When you get to the 2, go*

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April Officer Reports



**Seneschal:** Announced Queen's Champion

**Arts & Sciences:** Persona Banquet/Feast, and plan to do more persona classes in the fu-

ture. July A&S July 11 at 7:00 pm Dance at Lord Ryan's and Lady Blasé's. August A&S Token clean up and September A&S

Known World Geography. Banners – work to continue at Lady Blase's.

**Castellan:** Nothing to report.

"All the world's a  
stage,  
And all the men  
and women merely  
players.  
They have their  
exits and their  
entrances,  
And one man in his  
time plays many  
parts,  
His acts being  
seven ages."  
—Shakespeare

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right. (It's the only way you can go, just beyond are barricades.) Take the 2 up towards Wrightwood past Desert View, then turn left onto Sheep Creek. It will dead-end on Lone Pine Canyon. Turn left on LPC, cross the wash .

The Craft Day was on July 11 Their Excellencies Malcolm and Robyn of Dreiberger.

### Fighter Practice

Fighter Practice is at 6:30 pm Monday nights at Sir Killian's. For information please email [kiltek@earthlink.net](mailto:kiltek@earthlink.net).

### Food at War!

We have the wonderful menu from our wonderful food vendor! Here it is and I am hungry already:

Bread Bowls: beef stew, chili, and clam chowder  
Curly Fries, Sweet Potato Fries, Onion Rings  
Funnel Cakes with powder sugar, cinnamon, chocolate syrup, fruit and whip cream (Fruit flavors of apple, blueberry, cherry, peach, and strawberry)  
Biscuits and Gravy  
Shaved Ice, Raspberry Lemonade, Mint Tea, Sodas, and Bottled Water, Coffee, Cider, and Hot Chocolate  
Oh my, that sounds good...

### Hesperia Days

Our demo will be at the Hesperia Days parade and fair of September 22.

### Highland War

Please see our Seneschal's Corner for more details. A few notes: If you would like to participate with the Shire meals please contact Lady Jane. Already signed up are

**Fri** – Dinner: Teka & Killian  
**Sat** – Breakfast: Gregor & Jane  
Lunch: Caitlin  
Dinner: Marina & Fritz  
**Sun** – Breakfast: William Bell  
Lunch: Nathan & Holly  
Dinner: Magdalen & Davi

### Projects

Kingdom camp walls – have canvas waiting for paint color information; at present will not get done until after Hesperia days

Shire camp walls – pricing walls

Business Cards – Caitlin working on

Dragon wing – cost \$1170.75 (post note order and check mailed June 12)

Clean out Trailer and have garage sale for stuff not used or needed any more

## The Knight of Eire Sails Far



### In honor of Sir Killian Mac Taggart

*An Irish conachlonn in praise of an Irish knight at Crown Tourament*

The Knight of Eire sails far away  
 Away from Eire his native home  
 Home green and mountains fair  
 Far from home Killian sails from Eire  
 Eire of the rolling hills  
 Hills of iron cold and voices strange  
 Strange voices in the wind.

Wind from the west blows Killian to cold steppes  
 Steppes to planes of Kievan Rus  
 Rus maid there he meets  
 Meets and sword offers injustice to right  
 Right for the sake of the Rus maid  
 Rus maid all light and fire  
 Teka fire of love.

For glory's sake they travel to a farther land  
 Land of Caid gold under the sun  
 Sun burning bright the shallow hills  
 Hills of the strong hand, hills of the king  
 King's crown won by trial of arms.  
 Arming well the Irish knight with his lady sail a sandy  
 sea  
 A sea of desert springs and cities bright.

Bright his armor as an Irish knight meets three men  
 strong  
 Strong warriors contending for the throne of Caid  
 Caid the fair, Caid the golden, Caid journey's home  
 A home hard-fought and fiercely kept  
 Kept safe by the strong hand of the king  
 King's crown glittering fair.

Fair fought was the first trial  
 Trial that ended with the first man's hard fall  
 Fall of the anvil and butterfly and castle breached  
 Breached that holder of the Crescent Sword  
 Black-moon knight next weaves war upon the dragon

Dragon flown from the northern lights  
 Lights upon the field  
 Field of glory field of arms  
 Arms raining blows and sorely wounded is the  
 Irish knight  
 Knight falls to the dragon-winged lion  
 Lion-like comes now Killian to battle the third  
 man,  
 Man of blood and conquest on Hastings field  
 Field now turned to combat for the crown  
 Crown contested by two swords  
 Two swords weaving, two shields clashing  
 Clashing metal  
 Clashing bright  
 Clashing red until falls an Irish knight.

Knight lies still upon the field  
 Field of blood and honor  
 Honorable his lady and honorable his quest  
 Yet death overtakes them all.  
 All is silent, all is still.

Still the desert day  
 Day fades to dark  
 And darkly into star-blazing sea of night  
 The Knight of Eire sails far away.

*Slan agus beannacht, Killian.*

**-- By THL Caitlin Christiana Wintour**

*A conachlonn is an Irish form of chain verse where the first word of each line must either repeat or be a similar sound to the final word of the preceding line. The first and last words of the poem should match or rhyme, and the last line may repeat the first. This poem was an honor and a pleasure to write for Sir Killian and his beloved lady.*

## S eneschal's C orner



Lady Jane de Sealynn

### By Jane de Sealynn

Highland War is fast a pone us. Plans are moving fast. Merchants are being lined up. We even have a Food Merchant. The schedule is being put together. I have e-mailed a copy to everyone I had an address for. If you haven't seen it let me know, I will get a copy to you. The sooner the schedule is finished, the quicker I can get it on the web page for all to see. I am planning to send a copy to Valdis this week whether it is finished or not so people will get a general idea of the schedule. I will add a note that there may still be changes so check back often.

Please everyone we need your help to make this the best war ever. Volunteering is the best way everything runs smoothly. Troll, Marshals, moving hay bales, set up, trash pick up, children's helpers, clean up

and many other things need to be done. We all help it gets done faster and with lots of fun.

Also Hesperia Days comes fast on the tail of Highland War. Greg is in contact with the people in charge and will have a report for us at the meeting. So far we plan on marching in the parade (no truck and trailer) with horses maybe. At Hesperia Lake we are hoping to just set up a day shade by the area we will be do the fighting Demo in and have the area for the fighting Demo roped off for safety.

### Garb Gathers

Garb Gathers is our sewing group that everyone can take advantage of. If you need help sewing that first garb or need to do some research for that new outfit for the next big event, then this is the place for you. If there is a topic that everyone wants to learn about we will set up a meeting. Otherwise please contact Lady Jane de Sealynn and arrange the time at her home to look through the library or work on a project. Contact Lady Jane de Sealynn at [sealynn@hotmail.com](mailto:sealynn@hotmail.com).

## Recipe Corner: Tarts



### By THL Kateryn de Develyn

*From the Editor: this month we turn to THL Stefan's wonderful resource Florilegium. The below is excerpted with permission from a longer article.*

#### Apple and Pear Tart

3 apples chopped  
 2 pears chopped  
 1/2 cup dried figs, chopped  
 1/2 cup currants, chopped  
 1/4 teaspoon fresh coarsely black pepper  
 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon  
 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice  
 1 pie shell  
 sugar -- for garnish

Mix fruits and spices together thoroughly. Spread the mixture evenly in the bottom of a pie shell. Bake at 450 deg F for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 350 deg F for 20 minutes or until crust is golden brown and filling is bubbling. Serve at room temperature. Garnish with sugar if desired. This can be made as a large pie, or as mini-pies, or even muffin or mini-muffin sized pies. Adjust cooking time downward when using smaller pies.

#### Cheese Tart

8" pie crust  
 6 eggs

1 & 1/2 lb fresh-made cheese: brie, Neuschal, mozzarella, etc.  
 1 tblsp ginger  
 1/4 cup sugar  
 8 threads saffron  
 Salt to taste

Mash cheese and egg yolks together. Grind saffron with the sugar to crush the threads. Add the salt and ginger. Put in crust, and bake 50 minutes at 350deg. Cool before eating. This can be made as a large pie, or as mini-pies, or even muffin or mini-muffin sized pies. Adjust cooking time downward when using smaller pies.

#### Cream Tarts

Pastry for 12 tart shells (24 mini shells)  
 1/2 cup sugar  
 2 cups light cream  
 1/4 tsp. salt  
 saffron threads  
 4 eggs

Beat eggs and sugar together. Grind saffron with salt then add to cream. Beat both batters together. Pour into shells. Bake at 400 for about 20 minutes. Can be served dressed with sugared violets or borage flowers on top. Candied orange peel looks good also. This is another one that can be done in different sizes. Tart, muffin, mini-muffin size. Again, adjust the time to cook downward as you use smaller sizes.

"I am constant as  
 the northern star,  
 Of whose true-  
 fix'd and resting  
 quality  
 There is no fellow  
 in the firmament."

— from Julius  
 Caesar

## Tubbed and Scrubbed: An overview of bathing in the Middle Ages



by Master Giles de Laval

*Editor's note: A rather great article from Florilegium!*

Medieval people never bathed. Everyone knows that, right? This is probably the biggest myth about the period we study, perpetuated by schoolroom history, Hollywood movies and outdated scholarship. The perception that medieval people never bathed and lived their lives in a state of filth is completely absurd, and no more true of medieval society than it is of modern society. In fact bathing and washing were a common part of daily life in the Middle Ages, as illustrated by a wealth of written and pictorial evidence.

Public bathing was commonplace during the Classical world, indeed the baths were a centre of social life. This tradition survived after the fall of Rome in the Eastern empire and the Moslem world. A few Roman bath houses did remain in use in Europe, including one at Aachen used by Charlemagne; but for the most part the practice of communal bathing seems to have died out in continental Europe during the Dark Ages. Early travelers such as the Italian bishop Liudprand of Cremona and the Saxon nun Hrotsvitha described bath houses in Constantinople and Cordoba respectively. Norse literature shows that bath houses and saunas were quite common in Scandinavian countries, not only towns but every large farm was said to have one. Indeed, one of the

very first structures built by the settlers upon their arrival in Iceland was a sauna. Western crusaders arriving in the east were amazed and intrigued by the institution of the hammam, as both Christian and Arab historians note, and seem to have adopted this aspect of eastern life with enthusiasm (as well as something of the personal cleanliness of their Moslem neighbours, including pubic shaving). It is probable that pilgrims returning from the Holy Land re-introduced the bath house into Western Europe.

Bath houses flourished in the major European cities in the 13th century, and by the 15th century they were a feature of many sizeable towns. Unlike the elaborate fixed plumbing of the Roman and Moslem baths with large communal pools of varying temperatures, the medieval European bath house instead used large wooden tubs filled with hot water—only the very wealthy constructed special bathing rooms in their homes. These tubs were large enough for two or three people, and many illustrations show curtains that could be drawn around the tubs, either for privacy or to create a tiny sauna (and indeed some bath houses had separate "sweating rooms").

Most surviving illustrations depict people sharing baths, and usually men and women bathing together. Tables with food and drink are also commonly shown either next

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to the tubs or placed across them, with the bathers enjoying a meal as they soaked. One 15th century woodcut shows a single board laden with food stretching across five baths. It is interesting to note that in these bath scenes, total nudity is rarely depicted; usually men are shown wearing a hat or linen cap, and often a breechclout (or just a strip of cloth tied about the hips). Women are very often shown wearing elaborate headdresses and necklaces; it is hard to be certain whether this detail is fanciful, or depicts prostitutes in a provocative state of semi-undress.

By the mid 13th century, bath houses were so numerous in Paris that the estuvers, or proprietors of such establishments, were permitted to form their own guild. Paid criers went about the city at daybreak, announcing that the water was hot and inviting customers in. The price of admission was set by law at two denieres for a steam bath, four for bathing afterwards. This price could not be increased without the approval of the provost of Paris.

Of course, along with getting clean, there were other activities that being naked and relaxed was conducive to. Churchmen and moralists constantly railed against the predomination of prostitution in bath houses; one more reason for the church to revile the

"sinful" practice. The common English word stew, meaning brothel, comes from the old French *etuves*, or bath house; in some cities by the 1500's the two terms were interchangeable. A decree issued in 1254 by the provost of Paris forbade proprietors of bath houses to keep whores on their premises or promote their commerce, under penalty of losing their establishment and assets. However, this decree was withdrawn two years later.

Aside from public bath houses, many contemporary sources give a picture of private bathing (bathing at home). There was a vogue for sunken bathtubs in privy chambers of noble residences in the early 16th century; the palaces of Chambord and Hampton court boast such bathing rooms. However the practice can be traced to a much earlier use, such as the bathing chamber in Leeds castle dating to 1291. This seems to have been a transitional phase, as water as piped from the lake surrounding the castle, to be heated for the bath, which was placed in a canopied recess. It may have also been used as a cold bath, in the same manner as the Roman *frigidarium* or Norse sauna.

However, for most of the Middle Ages large wooden tubs were used for bathing. The necessity for bathing is mentioned in the codes of

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## Tubbed and Scrubbed: An overview of bathing in the Middle Ages



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courtly love formulated by Andreas Capellanus, as being clean and sweet-smelling was pleasing to one's lover. The 14th century Italian Book of Manners likewise noted that bathing and changing one's linen regularly was civil and mannerly towards others. According to the precepts of chivalry of Ramon Lull, one of the duties of the squire was to heat water for his lord's bath. Bathing was an important part of the chivalric rituals of dubbing a knight. The postulant would bathe before spending the night in prayer; thus physically and spiritually purified he was ready to take up the burdens of knighthood. As with public bathing, period illustrations often show men and women bathing together (although the women are usually without the elaborate headdresses and jewels, perhaps supporting the theory that such women in illustration of public bathing are indeed prostitutes). Several illustrations show that in pleasant weather a bath could be taken outside, and enjoyed in the garden with a table of refreshments - a very civilised luxury! Offering a bath to one's guests was considered a courtesy, and by the 15th century was firmly entrenched in the codes of hospitality.

Other forms of personal hygiene were also practiced: washing the hands before and after eating is often referred to in period literature, and basins and ewers appear with remarkable regularity in illustrations. Hand

washing became an elaborate ceremony at banquets in the 14th and 15th centuries. This office was performed by a server called the Laverer, who was distinguished by the long fringed towel borne over the shoulder or around the neck. The Laverer bore water and towels to the guests for them to wash before the feast commenced. Water was dispensed from the aquamanile ("water for the hands", sometimes called an aiguiere), which in noble households was usually a finely wrought ewer, often fanciful in form, being shaped like a lion, horse or other animal, or even the bust of a young woman as in the case of a particularly fine example held in the Cluny Museum.

The Church decried bathing as a luxury and a sinful indulgence, and it is from documents recording this stance that the popular misconception that medieval people did not bathe is most likely to have arisen. This was a holdover from the early Church, where ascetics and eremites would refrain from bathing as a way of mortifying the flesh. The Benedictine Rule stated that the sick were allowed to take baths as often as they needed, but for those in good health baths would be tolerated only rarely. Less austere orders such as the monks of Cluny assembled each morning in the cloister to wash. By the late Middle Ages however this attitude seems to have eroded; with bathing and steaming so widespread at all levels of

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society that the practice was no longer questioned. The Dominican Felix Faber enthusiastically approved of bodily cleanliness and stressed the importance of regular changes of body linen. In the minds of many people frequent washing may have assumed the same spiritual value as frequent confession.

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## Share Birthdays



*From the Chronicler: quick note on birthdays.*

*If I've got your birthday wrong or not at all — which is not surprising given my level of organizational skills — PLEASE let me know! You can reach me at [chrislynnnet@gmail.com](mailto:chrislynnnet@gmail.com).*

Alaric Wintour 7/6

Killian MacTaggart 7/13

Saher de Wahull 7/17

Fritz Der Gefolgsman 7/31

Happy birthday!!

