

Myrgenfeld Chronicle

A newsletter for Myrgenfeld, a Canton of Wiesenfeuer
For the month of January
Anno Societatis LIV, Anno Domini 2021



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From the desk of the Seneschal:

Greetings from the Seneschal!

I hope this finds all in good health. We are still looking at different ways to have meetings, get-togethers and other gatherings within the current restrictions of the day.

I welcome any and all suggestions for ways to make these happen and what your interests would be. Fall is fast approaching and it seems like forever since we've been able to partake of each other's company. I, for one, miss the camaraderie of our gatherings and look forward to a time soon when we will be able to resume them.

Until such time, be well! We are all here for each other.

In service,

Denis Cheeseman

Seneschal

Our current schedule is:

1st Thursday – Populace gathering at 7:30pm-9pm via Facebook Messenger

Officer Reports:

Chronicler – Lady Faoiltigearna MacEanruig – If you send in content, please send a content waiver with it. (The form can be found at <https://ansteorra.org/forms>) This goes for all forms of media except officer's reports: Written, visual, and auditory (though auditory is not likely to be used in the newsletter) and must be from all contributors. We currently have no 'standing waivers' for anyone. If you think you have such a form, re-submit to chronicler@myrgenfeld.ansteorra.org

Open offices in the Canton

Minister of Arts and Sciences

Rapier Marshal

Chivalric Marshal

Hospitaler

Happenings in Myrgenfeld:

Myrgenfeld / Wiesenfeuer Herbal Guild

The Myrgenfeld Herbal Guild meets the third Thursday of each month.

In October we will be doing outdoor cooking. The focus is on Cooking in Clay. The meeting will be from 6 pm – 10 pm with prep starting at 5pm. Message Aubrey for more details.

For November through January we will be studying the Ansteorra Herbal Guild classes. Classes will be on Zoom.

Thursday, January 21, 2021 at 7 PM – 9 PM

Kingdom of Ansteorra Herbal Guild class - Poisons and Antidotes

Please look for more information on the Myrgenfeld Facebook page.

Pottage

By Honorable Lady Aubrey Ericsdatter

Pease porridge hot,

pease porridge cold

Pease porridge in a pot, nine days old.

Some like it hot, some like it cold.

Some like it in the pot, nine days old.

If there is one dish that exemplifies Medieval cooking it would probably be pottage, which is basically a soup or stew. Pottage was a staple of the medieval diet, from the lowliest peasant to the royal family. Pottage is built on root vegetables; the produce you'd have found in any garden patch or root cellar. There was an enormous range of pottages, from the most basic vegetable (herb) soup to fancy meat or fruit pottages with luxurious imported spices. A pottage recipe would vary depending upon the vegetables and meat available at the time. Dried pease, or peas could be used to make Pease porridge, which was a form of split pea soup. Anything that could be thrown in a pot and boiled together could do as a pottage (or "potage"). It was typically eaten with bread or served directly in a bread trencher. Depending on the home, the pottage would be prepared in either an earthenware pot and left to simmer on the hot ashes or hung on a beam in a large cauldron directly over the hearth. A peasant pottage would usually consist of whatever vegetables and herbs they had on hand boiled in some stock. Those who lived on the edge of starvation had to make use of every edible item they could find, and just about everything could go into the pot for the evening meal. If the ingredients were available, the pottage might be thickened with barley, oats, pease, beans, or bread crumbs. Only on special occasions or during the winter would they include meat. Using a little meat in this manner would make it go further as sustenance. Because of the ingredients they had on hand (typically cabbage, turnips, leeks and onions), peasant pottages tended to be quite thin. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. (This is true in some modern "peasant stew" recipes.) But it was not common for food to remain there for nine days — or for more than a single day, for that matter. People living on the edge of starvation were not likely to leave food on their plates or in the pot. Contaminating the carefully-gathered ingredients of a night's supper with rotting food, thus risking illness, is even more unlikely. What is likely is that leftovers from the evening meal were incorporated into a breakfast that would sustain the hard-working peasant family for much of the day. A pottage for urban dwellers or wealthy citizens would be cooked in the same method, but in a cauldron hanging over the kitchen hearth or fireplace. The difference, though, is that there was a much wider variety of ingredients and flavors, so it generally tasted better and was typically much thicker. Town dwellers had access to many more types of food and were not bound only to the foods they could grow in their tiny urban gardens. Anything available at the market that they could afford

could potentially be thrown in the pot. A variety of oats and grains would be used to thicken, if desired. Meat was more widely available, as were imported spices and herbs. The wealthiest homes would serve fancy pottages like frumenty or morrew, which often included additional ingredients like exotic meats, sugar, currants, and saffron. For anyone lucky enough to dine with the nobles at court, the sky was the limit when it came to pottage-worthy ingredients. Pottage Ingredients Vegetables – the most common ingredients for pottage making. These included cabbage, onions, leeks, celery, garden peas. The vegetables in the soup would depend upon what the people had grown and what time of year it was. Herbs – for the average peasant, extra flavouring for the pottage came from fresh herbs such as parsley, sage, thyme and rosemary. Spices – these were an extra source of flavouring but as they had to be imported, they were expensive and usually only affordable by the rich. The most common spices used in pottage included cloves, nutmeg and cinnamon. Saffron strands were sometimes used to add colour and an extra exotic flavour saffron was the most expensive of all spices imported.