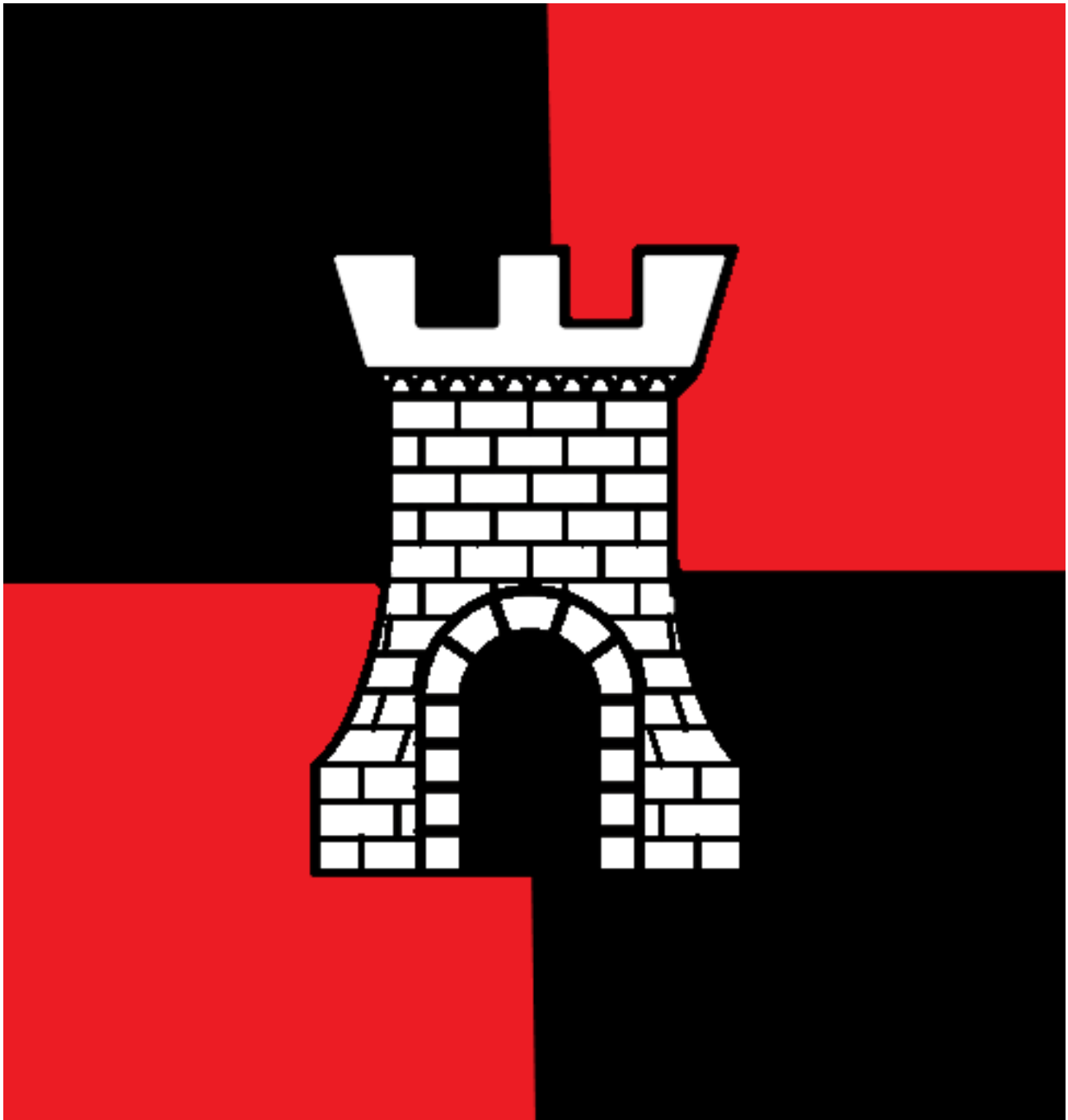
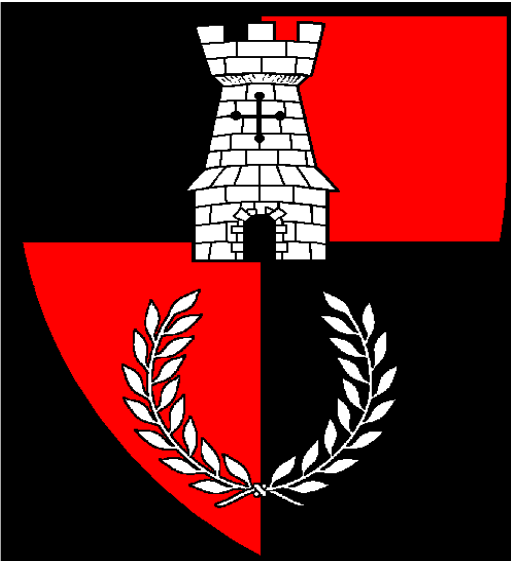


The Banner

March 2022 A.S LIVII

Volume 33 Issue 3





Welcome to the Barony of the Lonely Tower!

Greetings and warmest wishes to all who have wandered into these lands of the Barony of the Lonely Tower.

The Barony of the Lonely Tower is the local SCA group for the Omaha/Council Bluffs metro and surrounding area, and part of the Kingdom of Calontir, which covers most of Nebraska, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and a small portion of Arkansas.

If you are unfamiliar with the Society of Creative Anachronism (SCA), you can find out more information by visiting the Society's introduction page. We would also encourage you to visit the SCA's Newcomer's Portal.

The best way to get involved with us is to attend as many local meetings and events as your modern life allows - however, we understand life comes first and this is just a hobby. You may participate with us as much or as little as you like.

When you attend activities, be sure to introduce yourself and let us know what your interests are. Don't be afraid to ask lots of questions as our Barony is filled with members who would love to answer them for you.

To find out more about our events and activities, be sure to check out our website as well as the calendar at the back of this newsletter. For more information or to ask specific questions, feel free to contact one of our officers listed on the last page.

Welcome to the Current Middle Ages - We're excited to have you!

Be sure to visit the Society for Creative Anachronism's Pinterest page.

They have over 75 boards and hundreds of pins to help in whatever you're interested in.

Disclosures

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This is the March, 2022 issue of *The Banner*, a publication of The Barony of the Lonely Tower of the Society for Creative Anachronism, Inc. (SCA, Inc).

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Those outside the Barony wishing to receive a paper copy of *The Banner* may do so by sending a \$15 donation per year to cover mailing costs.

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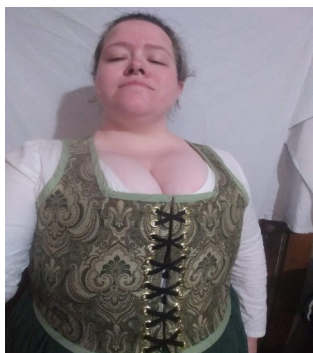
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From the Baron and Baroness of the Lonely Tower

Greetings unto the Barony of the Lonely Tower!

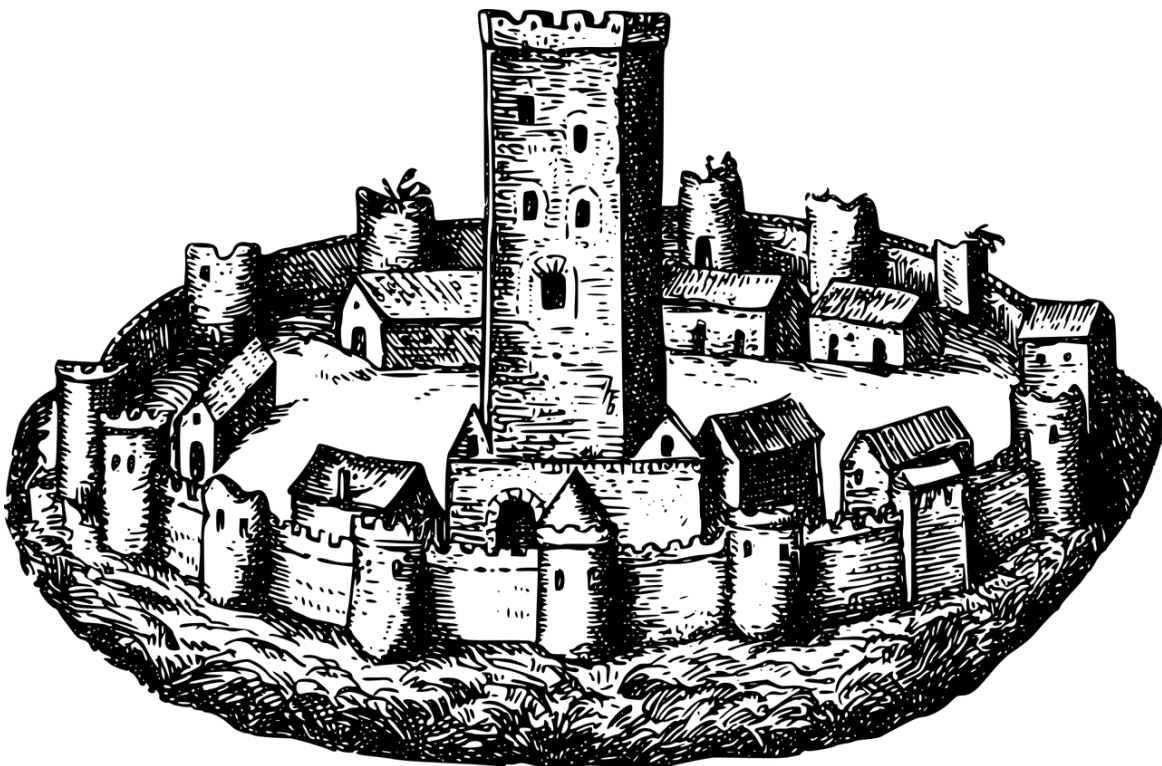
While it was a quiet month for us personally, activities continue both in person and virtually, locally and across the Kingdom. Winter War Maneuvers and Chieftains occurred and we were glad to see some members of the populace able to attend. L Zafara taught an enlightening class on Illumination, drawing 8 attendees! Please reach out to Her Excellency or L Eodain if you would like to learn or teach!

As the Kingdom readies for War, We once again encourage all of you to stay as safe and healthy as possible. We continue to look forward to our next opportunity to meet in person, should it remain safe to do so, and remain hopeful for an exciting year ahead!

In service,

Augustin and Aleit

Baron and Baroness



From the Seneschal

To the people of The Barony of The Lonely Tower

Greetings.

I hope that this letter finds all well and looking forward to the return to the outdoors. I for one enjoyed the chance to walk outside without my face hurting.

Continuing to look forward and to warmer times. The Barony plans to host an event in July centered around equestrian activities and a good helping of fighting mixed in. I am sure all of you will hear much more about this over the next few weeks, it should be a great time.

In case you do not know, there is talk once more about adjusting the kingdom calendar. Several options have been put forth and if you have access to facebook a more detailed discussion can be found at

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Calontir/permalink/10160176371799187>

also, a poll that both summarizes and collects your option can be found at

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSewck86P0yOsRecX4jiCzgn49zOUEEH3y3_L-wHpLNQ6sDw3A/viewform?fbclid=IwAR0aJizJSO59zGuOboXSXrQPG6s4y0M7jXG13t19SK52mFVngDKhQDxaXy0

please take the time to let the crown know how you feel, how this plays out will directly impact our Barony.

The Covid situation does seem to be improving I hope that it continues to do so, but it has not improved enough for long enough for there to be any major changes in our requirements.

COVIDSafe Policy requires that any person of age 12 or over show verification of full vaccination or a negative test taken within 72 hours of the start of the event. If you have questions about this, please check the FAQ at

<https://www.sca.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/20210829-Proof-of-Vaccination-or-Negative-Test-Policy-FAQs.pdf> .

Calontir specific information can be found at

<https://www.calontir.org/covidsafe/>

<https://www.calontir.org/covid-guidelines/>

If you still have questions about this, let me know. I can't say I can answer all the questions you may have right away, but I will do my best to find the answers for you.

In service,

Aleksandr

Minutes from February Business Meeting

Attendees:

- Chatelaine/Social Media – Jorunna Refsdottir
- Knights Marshal – Charles
- Archery Marshal – Dolan Madoc of Harlech
- Web – Gaius Corneilus-Scipio Titianus
- Chronicler—Tatjana Nikonovna
- Arts and Sciences – Eadaoin Inghean Chionoidha
- Seneschal— Aleksandr

Officers

- Baron and Baroness - not present

Chatelaine/Social Media – Jorunna Refsdottir

- Added a few people to the group
- Ren fair demo
- May 7th and 8th
- 25 people who answered they would be interested in doing it
- most are A and S
- need more fighters
- discussion about the demo.
- Small group.
- doing no demo is better than doing a bad demo.
- Jorunna will not be able to run the demo
- Astrid is willing to coordinate the demo if she can get a fighter to help with that AOR.

Exchequer – not present

Knights Marshal – Charles

- there has been a little bit of fighting
- Tuesdays have been 3 to 5 meeting, with most of it being slow work.
- Road is torn up still, so you have to enter by the back road
- need to rebuild loaner armor
- wondering if there is any funds to help repair armor
- need armor for smaller people

Archery Marshal – Dolan Madoc of Harlech

- restarting practice on Wed 23rd
- they do not expect a lot of people

Herald – Wulfridth Maynes

- not present
- need to check on her health
- feeling better but still has cough, fatigue, and brain fog

Web – Gaius Corneilus-Scipio Titianus

- updated calendar up thru April
- needs pictures for people

Chronicler – Tatjana

- February banner is out
- letters and art due by 28th
- Deadline for art/articles one week after Business meeting
- has requested articles from some people
- happy to take art or articles from anyone

Arts and Sciences – Eadaoin Inghean Chionoidha

- Kevin going to teach basic leather working
 - in person
 - 10 – 15 people
 - small cost for class \$5 for cup holder, \$10-\$15 for small bag.
 - how to use your computer to draft pattern
 - on-line class
- clothiers got moved to April, still waiting on Queens Prize

Coronation

- still need non-member surcharge

Gardening Grotto with Cristina

Asparagus

Asparagus officinalis

A native of the Mediterranean, this lovely perennial vegetable has traveled the world over; it is found wild in Africa, remnants have been found in Ancient Egyptian sites, and it is beloved throughout the Western Hemisphere. Few traces are found in Europe during the Middle Ages, except in French monasteries. However, it was served in the noble courts of Europe in the 16th century and in the 17th century by Louis XIV, as he was allegedly quite fond of it.

Ancient Greeks used it as medicine (granted, food was medicine in their philosophy) for bladder and bowel problems as consuming the vegetable has a diuretic effect.

Asparagus comes in several colours: green, white, and purple...sadly, the purple turns green when cooked. Green is the “standard” in the Lonely Tower, while white is more common on European plates.

Asparagus grows from a crown—a central root that branches. Strangely enough, asparagus actually crawls underground. The crown grows on one side a few millimeters or so every year, causing the sprouts (what we eat) to pop up a little bit away from the original planting site. Don't believe me? Here is a video...surprised me too. <https://youtu.be/XoSH43zg06Q>

Alright, technically asparagus grows from a seed, this adds an additional 1-2 years for a seed to develop a large enough crown for eating; this is on top of the two years needed to wait after planting a purchased crown. It is infinitely doable—but like most things in the garden, it takes patience. The plant will live and continue to produce spears for quite some time—15-20 years...though production will fall off. Planting seeds every 5 years for succession planting might be in order, to ensure a constant supply.

Plant the crowns a few inches deep in loose, rich soil and mulch. Keep them well watered—an inch a week. Then we wait. How long? 3 years. Nope, not kidding. The second year a couple of spears can be harvested, but it must be done judiciously. Never break or cut below the soil line—this will damage the crown and possibly kill the plant. Cut spears that are bigger in circumference than your little finger with a sharp knife, just above the soil line.

Beginning in early spring of the third year, harvest daily...sometimes twice a day. Only harvest thick stalks, and grab them before they begin to unfurl.

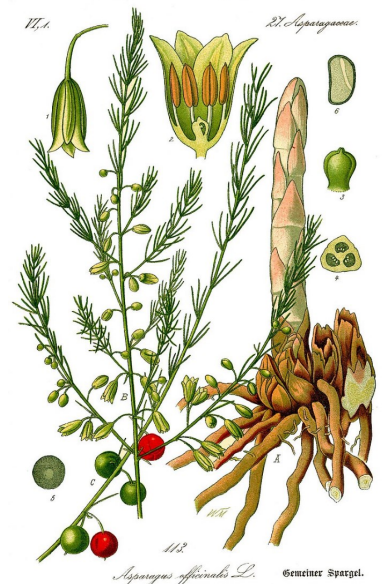
Once the spears start to be thinner (think pencil thickness), stop harvesting. These shoots must be allowed to fern out and provide the crown with food for the winter.

These plants love food. They need rich soil with plenty of mulch and compost added every year. Since they are a perennial, they must be top-dressed. Top-dress with an inch or so of compost and/or well-rotted horse manure every fall. It will be easy to tell where to put it, the skinny spears that will become ferns will be up—gently add the compost around and between the plants. Please make sure to not let the compost or mulch actually touch the stalk of the fern. That could encourage bacterial or fungal growth, harming the plant. Keep them well mulched with straw, or wood chips, or shredded leaves; mulch keeps the moisture level in the ground even. It also keeps the ground cool and can extend your harvest.

Happy Growing.

In grace,

Cristina



Resources:

<https://horticulture.oregonstate.edu/oregon-vegetables/asparagus-0>

https://hort.purdue.edu/hort/ext/Pubs/HO/HO_096.pdf

<https://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/archives/parsons/publications/vegetabletravelers/asparagus.html>

<https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Asparagus>

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/agricultural-and-biological-sciences/asparagus-officinalis>

rareseeds.com has three varieties of Asparagus seeds.

burpee.com offers crown bundles of green and purple varieties.

Cooking Corner with Cristina

Asparagus

Spring is coming. I swear it. And with our crazy weather in the Lonely Tower, it won't be long before asparagus starts filling the market stalls. I am hopeful despite the drought.

With this plenty comes the question of what to do with all this asparagus?

I have a couple of ideas for you.

First...fresh eating. Yes, asparagus can be eaten raw. Wash it well by submerging it in cool water for a few minutes and swishing it with your hands. This displaces any dirt caught in the tips. Then it can be patted dry and eaten, or blanched and placed on a crudites tray.

How to blanch it causes some people ire. It can be a pain to boil an entire pot of water, just to submerge the veggies for 30-60 seconds before submerging them in an ice bath. Want a cheat? Prep your ice bath...and fill the kettle. Line a heat tolerant bowl or pan with the asparagus, and pour the boiling kettle over it. Retrieve the asparagus and plop it into the ice bath, dry and put away the pan, done. Leaving the asparagus in the water for 30 seconds and then popping them into the ice water makes them perfect for a veggie tray. To eat them warm, let them sit in the water for 60-90 seconds, then retrieve and plate as normal.

I love pickles. Pickling vegetables makes me smile. And pickled asparagus frequently makes other people smile as well. I call that a win-win situation.

First, prep the veggies. Wash them thoroughly and snap off the base...gently bend cut end until it snaps. It should take off about an inch...that part is tough and not tasty. This happens when people cut below the soil line when harvesting in order to get a longer spear. Now, measure the spear against your jar. I find that wide-mouthed pint jars work best. Remembering that you need a half-inch of headspace and the spear needs to be fully covered by the brine...so give yourself an inch below the tip of the jar. I find this is about half the spear, but measure from the tip down. Cut the spears.

Next, pack the jars. I try to have a mix of stalk and tip in each jar. Important....place tips with cut sides up. Seems odd...but trying to grab that tip and pull it out of the packed jar after canning will ruin it. Fill the jar full...really full. Pack in every last spear and stalk you can. Then it's time for spices.

Each jar gets: 1 clove of peeled garlic, ½ tsp red pepper flakes, ½ tsp kosher salt, 1 tsp dill, 1 tsp mustard seed. How many jars did you fill? That determines how much brine to make. You'll need a cup or so of brine per jar. Use a 2:2:1 ratio of vinegar, water, sugar...though if you like more bite, you can swap out the water for vinegar. Apple cider vinegar or white vinegar is fine for this. Bring the brine to boil and make sure the sugar is dissolved. Gently pour over the asparagus to cover, then tap and wiggle to get all the air bubbles out. Add more brine to bring the headspace up to ½ - ¾ of an inch. Wipe the rims well with pure vinegar, lid, and pop into the hot water bath canner for 10 minutes. So tasty. I do recommend leaving them in their jars for at least 2 weeks before tasting.

Finally, if you are tired of eating them, have no more room for pickling them, you can dehydrate them.

Wash them well, trim the ends off and cut into 1-2 inch pieces. These must be blanched...but you can use the above cheating method leaving them in for a good two minutes before putting them into the icebath for a minute or so—we don't want them cold, just not cooking anymore. Pat dry the blanched pieces and separate them by type—tip or stalk. Place them on the dehydrating tray (by type) with room around them...they can touch, but don't crowd. The reason for the separation is that the stalks will take a bit longer to dry and we don't want to scorch the tips.

Dehydrating them at 125 degrees will take up to 24 hours...maybe longer. Check them every few hours after 8...scorched asparagus tastes as bad as it smells. To test for dryness, snap a piece between your fingers. Should feel crisp and not at all bendy.

After removing from the dehydrator, let the spears cool to room temperature. This keeps humidity from forming in the storage container. I store them in glass jars I've saved. Keep them in a cool, dry place, out of direct sunlight.

To rehydrate, submerge in hot water for 10-20 minutes and drain. Great in soups, stews, and as a side. Sadly, they aren't good on a fresh veggie tray after all that.

Happy cooking!

In grace,

Cristina.

Cooking Corner with Cristina- Part II

Seed Cakes*

Skill Level: Low-Moderate

Type: Baking

Special Equipment: large muffin pan, or regular muffin pan

Seed cakes have a long history throughout Europe—from Britain to the Netherlands. Baked for holidays and funerals, they might be a bit unusual to our modern palate here in Lonely Tower, but they are delightful.



Similar to a pound cake in construction and finished texture, the caraway seeds add an exotic pop.

Preheat oven to 325°F...yes, that seems low, trust me.

1 cup butter, softened

1 cup white sugar

3 eggs, room temp

2 cups all-purpose flour

2 tablespoons caraway seeds

½ teaspoon ground mace—or nutmeg if you must

¼ cup brandy, sherry, or light rum (apple or white grape juice, or even lemonade can be substituted)

Sugar for sprinkling

Grease the muffin tin with butter or shortening or Baker's Joy spray

Cream the butter and sugar until fluffy. Strongly recommend a mixer for this. The leavening for the cake comes from this step and the eggs.

Add eggs one at a time, mixing well after each. Scraping the bowl frequently.

Add half the flour, the caraway, and the mace. Mix gently until combined.

Add brandy, mix until incorporated.

Add remainder of the flour and mix gently until combined.

Spoon evenly into the muffin tin. Sprinkle each with sugar...a full teaspoon for a large muffin cup, ½ teaspoon for the regular. I know it seems like a lot, but it forms a lovely crackly top and sweet crunch.

Bake 35 minutes for the large tin, 25 for the small. Cakes are done when lightly browned and a tester in the center comes out clean.

Remove from pan immediately and cool on a rack. Will store wrapped well on the counter for 3 days, or freeze for up to 3 months.

*Note: This is a companion recipe to Cristina's article on caraway seeds in last month's Banner.

Baronial Awards

All members of the SCA are encouraged to send in award recommendations for those members of the populace that they believe are worthy of recognition. Below are the names and brief descriptions of awards given in the Barony of the Lonely Tower.

The Cord - The Cord is simply that, a cord in the Lonely Tower colors that denotes the person wearing it is an active member of the Barony.

The Rose Window - The beauty and craftsmanship required in the making of a rose window gives us the definition for this award. The Rose Window is given for promise in the pursuit of the Arts and Sciences.

The Column - The support needed to keep the Lonely Tower standing comes from its many Columns. This award is given to those who have helped serve the needs of the Barony of the Lonely Tower.

The Defenders of the Gate - *Cave Canes!* "Beware of the Dogs" is the motto of this fair Barony. And well said, the knights, huscarls, fyrdmen, fighters, archers and equestrians of this barony have given us ample reason to be proud of each area of endeavor in the martial arts. Thus this award is given to those who are a part of our martial presence at tournaments held in the Lonely Tower and throughout Calontir and the Known World.

The Goose Migrant - Where the goose flies, so it takes with it the spirit of this land. This award is for those who have traveled widely within or without Calontir, representing the Barony wherever their paths may lead them.

The Keystone - Given to those without whose presence the Barony would likely not have become nor likely remain the beloved place we all share. In this award we seek to honor those who enhance, embrace or support the Barony and by extension the Kingdom and Society.

Baronial Champions

Arts & Sciences Champion

(1st Quarter)

Aethelwyn aet Ulancumbe

Cut & Thrust Champion

(2nd Quarter)

Master Rolf Hobart

Archery Champion

(3rd Quarter)

Lord Owain the Younger

Armored Combat Champion

(4th Quarter)

Sir Bjarm Rorikson

Officer's Warrants

10/2019 - Archery Marshal

01/2024 - Chronicler

01/2021 Exchequer

01/2021 - Anser Pursuivant (Herald)

01/2020 - Chancellor of the Exchequer

03/2020 - Minister of Arts & Sciences

06/2020 - Seneschal

01/2021 - Knights Marshal

08/2021 - Web Minister

Credits

Baronial Officers photos—page 3:

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Baronial Gathering LI	2 Archery Practice 6:30	3	4	5
6	7	8 A & S Get Together C	9 Archery Practice 6:30	10	11	12 Gulf War
13 Gulf War	14	15	16	17	18	19
		Baronial Gathering LI	Archery Practice 6:30			
20 Gulf War	21	22 A & S Get Together C	23 Archery Practice 6:30	24	25	26
27	28	29 Baronial Gathering LI	30 Archery Practice 6:30	31		