

Lochac

Herb & Garden Guild



Guild Journal, Volume 4, No. 3. April 2009.

*** Guild AGM: At Rowany Festival, Monday 3pm, AS1 ***

From the Head Gardener

Greetings all,

This festival sees the start of the third year since submission of our petition to become an official guild in the Kingdom of Lochac at Rowany festival in A.S. XLI (2007).

As head gardener I am the charter's custodian and so have been fortunate to look at our lovely charter on a daily basis - as created by the guild's own Mistress Marit.

The writing in Runic at the bottom of the charter is simply "Petition Granted Alfar Gudrun".

The Lochac Arts & Sciences Competitions continue to have competitions relevant to the Guild. Some upcoming competitions are:-

May Crown XLIV (2009):-

Medical Treatments - e.g. how would you treat gout, gangrene, headache

Midwinter XLIV (2009) hosted by ...

Calligraphy & Illumination needs - inks, vellum, quills, etc

Lord Belissario continues to have garden meetings in his home shire of Arrowsreach, and Lady Maeltuire in the shire of Adora also invited us to her garden during the last year.

The guild had some moneys from the Stonehenge prize for constructions on site festival two years ago. As an investment in the guild's future, more Herb & garden guilds tokens have arranged to be purchased from Master Alex the Potter (who has also made all previous tokens).

They really are quite cute, and these small scale hand made versions are all unique and of course based upon period examples. Be seen as a proud member of the guild by wearing your watering can!

Yours in Service,
Brian le fauchéur (Brian Pinch)

6/45 Thompson St, Woonona NSW 2517 AU
Mon-Wed 02 4253 7061 (but prefer email or postal enquiries)

faucheur@gardenandherb.com

Herb & Garden Guild posting boards

Website: www.sca.org.au/herb/

Email list: go to www.sca.org.au/mailman/listinfo/garden

Send Garden mailing list submissions to garden@sca.org.au

Cristoval Asks ...

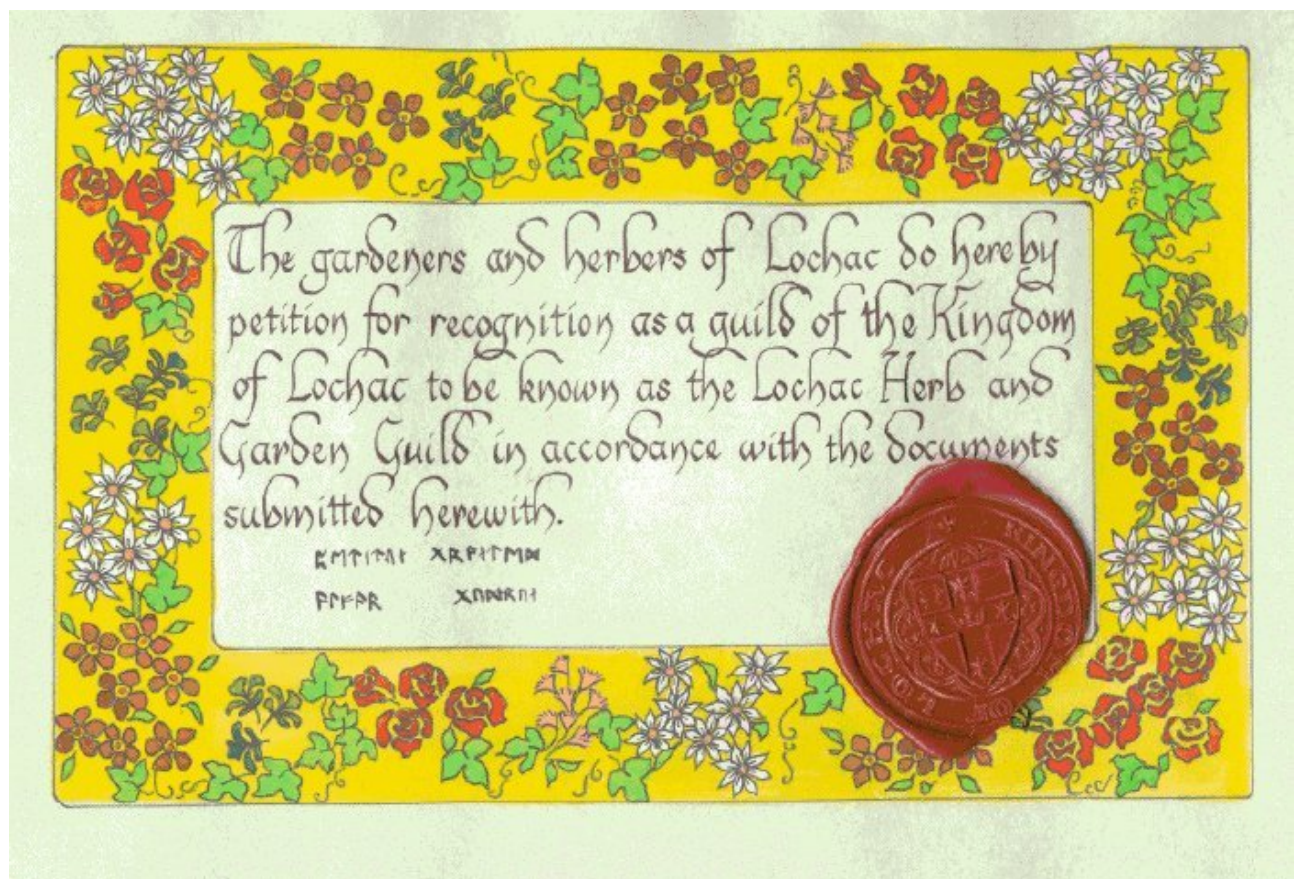
Does anybody know where one would find a consolidated list of plants, with their earliest known dates in Western Europe?

A bottle of mead to the first person who can furnish such a list, at least covering most herbs and fruit trees.

SCA Celebrity Gardens

Do you know anybody 'famous' in Lochac who has an interesting and reasonably medieval garden? Please recommend them to Cristoval, who would like to do such an article with each future issue.

Guild Petition



In My Garden

by Belissario

About five years ago my partner and I were lucky enough to acquire a small cottage on a large (for the burbs) block in the Shire of Arrowsreach.

The backyard was dominated by the huge cherry plum that had had formed a weeping habit due to some incidental pruning. It provided a cool arbour overlooking the large green kikuyu lawn.

Great lawn! Never watered, it is green almost all year round, its lush and comfy to walk around barefooted. And incredibly invasive, difficult to control and a nightmare to dig out.

Over that first winter I dug in four small beds behind the garage where the lawn hadn't annexed and on the admonishment of my girl to keep it discreet.

The nearby Bunnings was a good place to start. The vege seedlings did quite well considering the overhanging plum and position only allowed about two hours of sun a day. The patch provided us with tomatoes, cucumbers, beans, zucchinis and salad greens.

Basic herbs immediately went around the patch and into pots beside the house; rosemary, oregano, thyme, sage, chives, lemon verbena and rue.

Some medicinal aloe and a great big pot of catmint were welcome house warming gifts from friends.

Lavender, violets and snapdragons went into a small flowerbed.

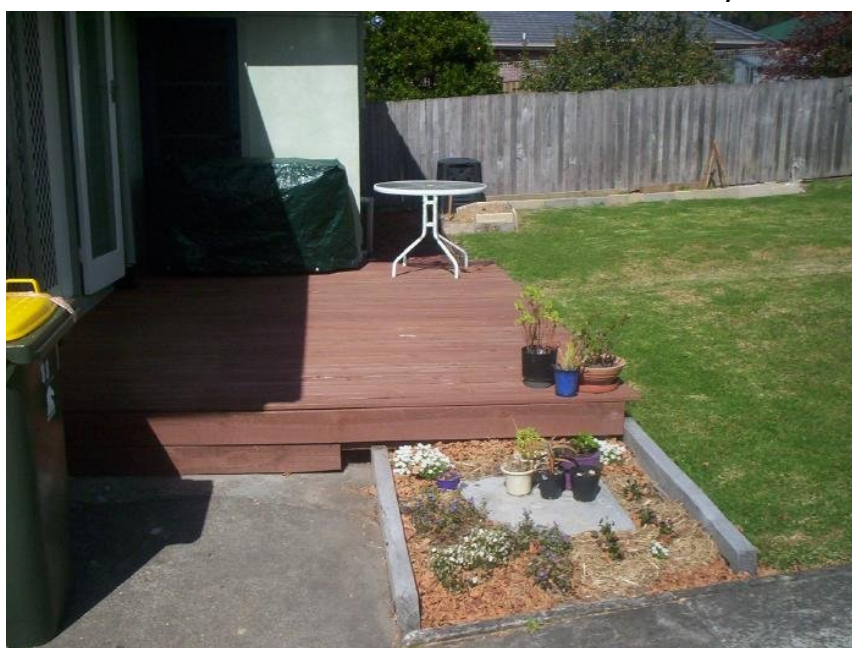
Mel relented and the vege patch was soon moved right next to the house and the grey water 'system'.

I started to laboriously dig out the lawn. Bunnings had been tapped and weekend jaunts to local nurseries soon expanded my herb collection to include French tarragon, German chamomile, winter savoury, pineapple sage and a variety of mints.

Places like Bulleen Art and Garden (6 Manningham Road West, Bulleen, VIC, 3105) and the nearby Greenery (4 Banksia Street, Heidelberg, VIC, 3084) provided tansy and feverfew, yarrow, lemon balm and lovage, valerian, santolina, curry plant, sorell and soapwort.

The Herb and Garden Guild Meets, visits to the Kyldara Park Herb Farm (108 Mulcahy's Road, Trentham, VIC, 3458), Heronswood (105 LaTrobe Pde, Dromana, VIC, 3936) and the Lilydale Herb Farm (61 Mangans Rd, Lilydale, VIC 3140) have seen a number of additions; apple sage, motherwort, bergamot, horehound, hyssop, golden marjoram, fruity sage, cardamon, mock orange and a juniper bush.

The Garden, 2004



A subscription to The Diggers Club and a growing interest in pemaculture have brought Chilean guava, cranberries, blueberries and goji berries into my garden.

The inspirational Ceres (Cnr Roberts and Stewart Streets, Brunswick East, VIC, 3057) has provided strawberries and most recently bush tucker plants like kangaroo berries and muntries.

During that time I have wrestled a 3mx5m vege patch out of the lawn, 3 square meters of 'culinary' herb beds and all the 'medieval' herbs in closely packed pots suppressing the kikuyu over another 3 meters.

I rotate the vegetable plantings though four beds; root cops and alliums, salad greens, acid lovers and peas, beans and brassicas. Green manure crops are utilised between staggered plantings.

Carrots, onions, parsnips and beets, spinach, silverbeet and rainbow chard, tomatoes, peppers and eggplant, snow peas, broad and climbing beans, broccoli, cauliflower, all home grown and delicious!

Most of these came as seedlings, again from Bunnings though over the past season or two I have started growing from seed and trying heirloom varieties.

A rhododendron and a few camellias have started a reluctant move towards flowering shrubs.

Finally dwarf cultivars of a lisbon lemon and Tahitian lime (to be espaliered), granny smith apple and nectarine have begun my food forest.

I have just ordered five heirloom apple varieties all on dwarf stock from Diggers to expand this area.

Though I have dabbled with this in the past, I am using a moon planting sequence during the next season's rotation, which incorporates almost every aspect of gardening life, including transplanting and pruning.

I cannot think of a better way to relax than to get down and dirty in my garden. I love getting dirt under my fingernails and get a real joy as I watch it bloom and fruit, wax and wane with the seasons.

The Garden, 2009



The produce it rewards me with is almost incidental to the feeling of wellbeing it brings.

I can honestly say that I cannot envisage a time that I would be without a garden, no matter how small.

Moon Planting

by Belissario

During	Phase	Plant	Like	And	
New Moon	Planting	Leafy vegies	Lettuce	Cucumbers	
			Spinach	Annuals	
			Celery		
			Broccoli		
			Cabbages		
			Cauliflower		
Crescent	Germination	Inoculating		Cut Lawns	to promote growth
Second Quarter	Feeding	Fruiting	Eggplant		
			Beans		
			Melons		
			Peas		
			Peppers		
			Squash		
			Tomatoes		
Gibbous	Growth				
Full Moon	Harvest	Root Crops	Beets	Perennials	
			Carrots	Biennials	
			Onions	Bulbs	
			Potatoes		
			Peanuts		
			Rhubarb		
			berries		
Fourth Quarter	Restraint	Cultivate		Cut Lawns	to retard growth
Last Quarter	Balsamic	Dormant	Harvest	Weed	
				Pests	
				Turn Sod	
				Transplant	
				Prune	

On Beetroot

by Cristoval

One of the pleasures of my new garden at Cockatrice Farm (www.cockatricefarm.com.au) is really fresh beetroot. Particularly in a kangaroo stirfry, though I expect venison would do as well.

I wondered whether beetroot was period, and found it in *The Herball or General Historie of Plants* by John Gerard. This was first published in 1597.

The common white Beete hath great broade leaues, smooth and plaine from which rise thicke crested or chamfered stalkes. The flowers grow along the stalkes clustering together, in shape like little starres, which being past, there succedeth rounde and vneuen pricklie seede. The roote is thicke, hard and great.

<snip>

There is likewise another sort hereof that was brought vnto me from beyonde the seas by that courteous merchant master Lete before remembred, the which hath leaues very great and red of colour, as is all the rest of the plant, as well roote as stalkes and flowers, full of a perfect purple iuice tending to rednesse: the middle ribbe of which leaues are for the most part verie broad and thicke, like the middle part of the Cabbage leafe, which is equall in goodnesse with the leaues of Cabbage being boiled. It grew with me 1596. to the height of viij. cubites, and did bring foorth his tough and vneuen seede very plentifully: with which plant nature doth seeme to plaie and sport hirsselfe: for the seedes taken from that plant which was altogether of one colour and sowed, doth bring foorth plants of many and variable colours, as the worshipfull gentleman master Iohn Norden can very well testifie, vnto whom I gaue some of the seedes aforesaid, which in his garden brought foorth many other beautiful colours.

<snip>

...The great and beautiful Beet last described may be vsed in winter for a salad herbe, with vinegar, oyle, and salt, and is not onely pleasant to the taste, but also delightfull to the eye.

The greater red Beet or Roman Beet, boyled and eaten with oyle, vineger and pepper, is a most excellent and delicate sallad: but what might be made of the red and beautifull root (which is to be preferred before the leaues, as well in beauty as in goodnesse) I refer vnto the curious and cunning cooke, who no doubt when he hath had the view thereof, and is assured that it is both good and wholesome, will make thereof many and diuers dishes both faire and good.



Ducks in the Orchard

by Cristoval

Since July 2008 we've owned a 100 acre farm near Goulburn, between Sydney and Canberra.

We have two adjoining houses there, one for us and one for guests. Mostly the guest house accommodates visitors working for us under the Willing Workers on Organic Farms (WWOOF) scheme. We've had more than 20 young people from many different countries to stay, which has been great fun.

Behind each of these houses is a large fenced backyard, which we're developing as an orchard, featuring older varieties of trees like damson plums and mulberries.

The orchard is intended to have some ducks living there, to help control pests. The trees are a little bit young to justify ducks just yet, but we've started a bit early.

My partner Allison (Lady Alys Dietsch) is chief procurer of ducks. We get them from the local poultry auctions, a noisy and chaotic affair. I'm claustrophobic, so I keep well away from the bidding.

It's often hard to see (and impossible to hear) which lot they are auctioning at any time. At our first outing to the auctions, Allison bid for a bag of wheat, but at the end of the day it turned out to be a pair of geese, who now live on one of our dams.

Anyway, I suggested to Allison that we might like a pair of silver appleyard ducks. Any ducks, really, except for muscovies, which seemed impossibly ugly to me. So Allison bid for some ducks, and when she went to collect them they sure enough turned out to be muscovies.

Muscovies are quite popular in poultry circles, being big ducks with tasty flesh. These are the ones with the red masks, especially on the older drakes. Actually they are a different species from other ducks, really being small South American geese.

So we ended up with three muscovy girls. They gave us heaps of huge, creamy eggs in Spring -- they make fantastic quiches and cakes, though not so good boiled or fried.

One took to flying out of the orchard, though she would always fly back for breakfast. We called her Foxfood, and we ate her so that we got in before a fox did. She was a tough old thing, not really worth the effort.

At another auction, we did get some mallard ducks. These are real ducks, of the Jemima puddleduck variety, all white. They are not as tame as the muscovies, but did give us heaps of eggs. They raised one clutch of ducklings (leading to a duck dinner) and another clutch was washed out in a storm.

Somewhere along the line, the remaining two muscovies grew on me. They are pretty relaxed birds, and I worked out that they were the best behaved animals on the farm. So I decided we'd get them a drake. (Allison alleges that I was too soft-hearted and couldn't face killing them, which I deny absolutely...)

So back to the auctions, and we bought a muscovy drake. He's called Nicky, after the French wwoofer who bid for him at auction.

Nicky the Duck

Nicky the duck is a friendly fellow, and decided that he wanted to be an inside duck. He was forever tapping on our kitchen door, asking to come in, and one day he did sneak in when someone left the door open. He pooped all over the back step, and soon we were resorting to running out making growling noises, and applying our feet to his backside. Cara our very gentle labrador has also taken to barking at him until he gets off the verandah. So Nicky is now pretty well behaved, as is his remaining original girlfriend.



The Destructo Duck Gang

At the last auction, we picked up a few more muscovy girls very cheaply. They were all "organically certified" from a farm that was closing down, and they were quite beautifully marked for muscovies. The catch was that as they get bigger they are nearly all turning out to be drakes. They make up the "Destructo Duck Gang" and they are forever sneaking out of the orchard and devastating parts of the garden. They particularly love silverbeet and the like, though they're not so keen on our prolific NZ spinach. More duck dinners soon I think, soft-hearted or not.



For those interested in this sort of thing, I keep a blog about the farm at www.cockatricefarm.com.au.

Annual General Meeting Herb & Garden Guild

Rowany Festival XLII, 21st March 2008

by the head gardener - Brian le faucheur

In Attendance

Sigurd, Crispin, Brian, Paul, Leonie, Taryn, Lyssa, Rhiceneth, Ava, Belissario, Snorri

Apologies

Cristoval, Beth, Marit

Minute Details - started 10.05am

There was a vegetable garden of sorts already existing on site - a vegetable patch of pumpkins - though not vegetable bearing at Easter.

A small herb garden was also created at the Abbotsford campsite.

Cristoval has produced another issue of the Herb & Garden Guild newsletter. Although not yet received for the meeting, it is expected to be at festival.

The watering can is the symbol of the Herb & Garden Guild, which members are entitled and encouraged to display to promote the guild.

More tokens are needed for new members to acquire. Some discussion about the guild was for promoting medieval stuff about gardens, whether it be plants, herbs, for cooking or perfumes, or for garden layout and design, as well as garden features etc.

Paul & Ava joined the Herb & Garden Guild at the meeting. Both were advised of the guild website <http://www.sca.org.au/herb/> and the links to join the email mailing list, which people interested in medieval gardening are welcome to do.

A suggestion was made in respect of the website that links be made for areas (Eg region, state, country) for noxious plants or plant restrictions. If people could send any links to the head gardener.

Brian advised he was continuing as head gardener. And got motions and support that he do so.

Cristoval offer of stepping aside if there wanted to be a new chronicler, as well as being willing to continue, was discussed. People were happy with Cristoval work and wished him to continue in this role.

Sigurd

- accepted the position of Reeve.
- funds from the Stonehenge competition last year were still noted as being possessed by the head gardener.
- promoted his collegia in respect of gardening to be held that afternoon.

Belissario

- continues as his position as deputy for Victoria
- intends to hold more of his garden gatherings
- requested list of people in his state of Victoria to encourage participation

The head gardener noted he knew of some people (keeps the list of those people registered for receipt of the newsletter). And also that there are guild officers in a number of states/territories.

A discussion was held on prohibited plants and quarantine. Mention was made of woad being chemically identical to indigo and also as a noxious weed. And that, as does the SCA, that laws, local, state and country are followed by the guild. ie including the non spreading of weeds. And the need to be aware of legislation. That limits on importing/exporting within Australia followed the Diggers club ordering limits.

Sigurd discussed his new garden, with wattle and daub fencing and purple and yellow carrots. And to allow seedsaving and seed sharing (ie wrong seeds are not grouped) prevention of flowering of one type.

Seedsavers as well as seed saving by the guild members was discussed.

It was mentioned that Seedsavers had decentralised, and there were local seedsaver networks. Sigurd presented the Seedsavers book to the meeting. It was produced by Mountain Wildlife Press, Lot 23 Explorers Rd Katoomba. The meeting was advised online editions existed.

To allow swapping of seeds between guild members. it was suggested people listing what they have (which will vary seasonally/annually).

And that saffron bulbs had not been noted as appearing yet in the catalogues.

Finished 11.00 am

Post Meeting Minutes Annotations by Head Gardener.

I've now ordered more guild tokens (10) from Alex the Potter. The cost for each will be \$4.00.

A call for people in Victoria to get in contact directly with Belissario .

A call for people to post to the list and/or to the head gardener when they have seeds available.

Some drinks were had by people in the tavern after the Good Friday ball finished.

The newsletter produced and printed by Cristoval was received after the meeting. It was distributed to as many members as we could find, but if you haven't received a hardcopy (or softcopy) can you please contact the head gardener. Select articles from the newsletter will be appearing on the herb & garden guild website <http://www.sca.org.au/herb/>

And the newsletter contained a list of places people had advised they obtained seeds commercially.