

Lochac

# Herb & Garden Guild



**Guild Journal, Volume 4, No. 4. April 2011.**

\*\*\* Guild AGM: At Rowany Festival, Monday 3pm, \*\*\*  
**MEETING PAVILION**

## From the Lord Protector

Greetings all,

It's a year now since I seized ~~power~~ was graciously elected by the assembled populace of the Guild.

The results have been ~~less than spectacular~~ notable for their calm and relaxed nature.

I urge you to ~~overthrow the tyrant~~ reappoint me as Eternal Leader.

Yours in Service,  
Cristoval (Rhys Howitt)

## Herb & Garden Guild posting boards

Website: [www.sca.org.au/herb/](http://www.sca.org.au/herb/)

Email list: go to [lochac.sca.org/mailman/listinfo/garden](http://lochac.sca.org/mailman/listinfo/garden)

Send Garden mailing list submissions to [garden@sca.org.au](mailto:garden@sca.org.au)

## Patron

The patron of the guild is Master Sigurd.

# Book Review – The Medieval Flower Book

by **Brian le faucheur**

## The Medieval Flower Book

ISBN 978 07123 4945 1  
First Published 2007  
by the British Library,  
author Celia Fisher

There is one or more pages for each of the 100 plus flowers represented in the book from Acanthus to Waterlilies. On each page is a picture of the flower – a facsimile copy of the "flower" mentioned from at least one of the many and varied manuscript sources.

The flowers are indexed and presented by their English names with their Latin equivalent. A great many of the facsimiles from the manuscripts are reductions of a full manuscript page, but some are details of the flowers highlighted from their source. Each flower has a historical anecdote and/or a description of it use.

The 8 page introduction is a bibliography of classical sources of botanical knowledge including Theophrastus' Enquiry into Plants, and Encyclopedia of Natural History from Pliny, and then De Materia Medica from Dioscorides. Problems of identification. " ... The first English plant list can be extrapolated from the Latin dictionary created by Aelfric in 995 ... ". And many others.

Flowers and their representation are not restricted to herbals, but are also mentioned in literary sources, as well as tapestries and margins in manuscript illumination and books of hours and any other botanical art. Although there are a lot of anecdotes and even some references to medicinal uses of flowers the author Celia Fisher apologises about the amount of material which needed to be left out.

This book is both a medieval reference book for flowers and herbs and a table book for interesting reading about flowers in a medieval context. In addition to the useful overview of botanical references and carefully referenced manuscript sources, the books real strength is in the stories

about each flower which is the majority of the book covering 105 pages.

This book review can only try to do some justice to the book by including some of the references. Please note these are only minor excerpts or asides in what I consider to be very interesting paragraphs related to each flower.

Some excerpts picked mostly at random:

### From Broom:-

p30 "The medieval name planta genista included broom, petty whin (*G. anglica*), dyers greenwood (*Genista tinctoria*), grose (*Ulex europaeus*)

### From Clover:-

p39 "In the Hours of Anne of Brittany, Bourdichon named clover souppe en vin, since the flowers were used to take off the vinegary edge wine often had"

### From Lupins:-

p77 "Lupins seeds could be ground into meal or used for healing and cosmetic ointments"

### From Rosemary

p105 "Rosemary means 'sea spray' - a poetic description of the Mediterranean coastal hills where rosemary bushes flowered in shades of blue and white."

### From Saffron:-

pp108-109 "In England Saffron as first cultivated at Saffron Walden c. 1359 and the accounts if several Cambridge colleges mention growing saffron - Peterhouse in 1375 and Kings in 1383".

As an aside it took less than 2 minutes to decide to purchase this book from Abbays Bookshop in Sydney. I found out about the price of the book ( \$55.00 ) only in walking to the counter.

# A Quick Look at Land Tenure in England

by Cristoval

After the Norman Conquest, the anglo-saxon property rights were pretty well wiped out.

The land was divided up between **tenants-in-chief**, who held their land directly from the King.

As this system settled down, it became customary for the heir of the tenant-in-chief to inherit these lands, after paying the King a tax called a **relief**.

The tenants-in-chief could grant lands to their own vassals in exchange for defined services, the basis of the feudal system. These **mesne lords** could themselves have their own feudal tenants.

This quickly became rather confusing, and in 1290 King Edward I established the **Statute of Quia Emptores**, which froze all further divisions. From that point forward, tenants could only substitute one for another, again with relief paid to the lord.

Indeed, the only alienation allowed was to the heirs of the land holder. The heir was either the eldest son, or if there were only daughters then the estate could be divided equally between them – which did still serve to break up estates somewhat.

There were various ways to get around this, effectively to sell the land, for instance by fabricating a legal dispute. The supposed losing side then “quitclaimed” the land to the other party, usually receiving a cash payment in settlement. These false legal actions were the main way to transfer land until 1837!

At the lowest level were leases by the common people, with rents paid on major feast days such as Michaelmas. The heirs had the first option on continuing the lease, following the customs of the particular manor. Often these customs were the same as for the lords, but some manors had **partible inheritance** where the land would be broken up evenly between all the children who wanted it, or sometimes just the sons. In some areas of the ancient Danelaw, for instance around Nottingham, there was a tradition called **ultimogeniture**, where the last son inherited – it was assumed that he would have been looking after the elderly parents.

For the common people, they typically still had to pay a relief: his best beast to the lord of the manor (called a **heriot**) and his second best to the parson (a **mortuary**). The transfer would then be entered in the court roll of the manor, and a copy given to the new **copyholder**.

These copies evolved into the title deeds that were used until recent times to transfer title.

## Allium Cepa (Onion)

**Translated from Middle German by Heinz Warnecke  
From: The New Herbal of 1543 by Leonhard Fuchs**

**Transcription of Translation and additions by  
Bhana Bhioncas Caristiona nic Beathain**

In Greek Onion is Crommyon, in Latin Cepa, the name the apothecaries have also adopted. The reasons for these names is discussed in detail in the Latin her books.

### Kind

There are many kinds which are in detail discussed by Theophrastus and Plinius and need no further explanation. The onions growing in our country are sometimes large and sometimes small, in colour sometimes red and others white, others are found others long. The best are those which are red and round.

### Forms

Onions have leaves similar to leeks, the stalks are round and hollow with a thin white hat which breaks open to show the white flowers which are close together. The flowers form in the seed pods and later contain the black heads. The roots are round like little buttons which form many layers of thin skin, the outer layer has a pink colour.

### Habitat

Onions like to grow in solid and moist soil and generally grow in gardens.

### Time

Onions are sown in spring, flower in summer and then bring their black seeds. Most onions are harvested at Barthomolei Day.

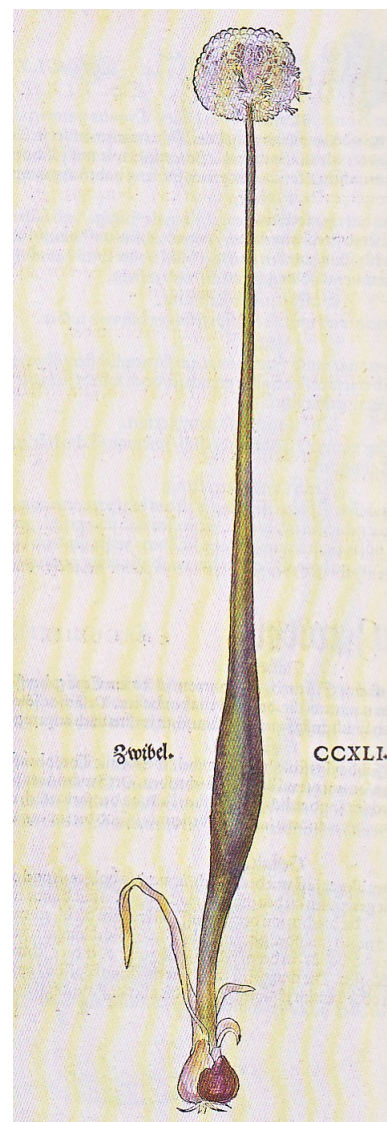
### Nature and Temperament

Onions are warm in the 4th degree and has a coarse substance in particular that can be squeezed out of it.

### Power and Effect

The long onions are sharper than the round, the red more than the white, the dry sharper than the fresh and the fresh sharper than the cooked. All onions are sharp and make wind, also make you hungry and thirsty and clean Causes relief with sort consistent bowel movements.

The peeled onion, soaked in oil, make in to a suppository and pressed into the rectum will relieve problems there. The juice of onions mixed with honey and added to the eyes, makes



the eyes clear and stops the infection. Also helps women get their periods, if placed in the vagina. Clears the head if placed in the nose. Onion juice with salt and honey and made into a plaster is a fine wound dressing for bites from mad dogs. The juice mixed with vinegar removes the white and black spots on a baby. Juice mixed with chicken fat makes a good ointment for spots where shoes make sore feet. The juice placed in the ears brings the hearing back and removes the sound in the ears. Makes the hair grow when rubbed on the skull. Boiled juice is a good diuretic. After eating too much, having cooked onion brings a good sleep. Grapes and figs mixed with onions and well macerated and placed on an infection will bring it to a head. Onions will break up tough body juices.

*Overview in English given in the rear of Fuchs page 911 describes "The Common Onion" and gives a summary of the above translation as*

*"the herbal once again presents a plant that is equally useful as a food and medicine. Fuchs mentions the onion's irritating effects on the eye and nose, and recommends its use for example as a haemorrhoidal suppository, a remedy for rabies and an aid against loss of hair."*

## Cabbage White Butterflies

***Cristoval pleaded for a solution to the moths. Any other ideas?***

Hello all,

We had a lot of cabbage moths the first few years of the vegie garden. But now in our 4th (or so, maybe more it's hard to keep track) year we have very few. I think the reason is my chickens. I have silky chickens that free range through the vegie garden most of the year. I protect the seedlings and strawberries with bird netting and allow the chooks to roam through the forest of plants once they are big enough to cope with a few pecks.

*We also have quite a number of full-sized chooks free ranging all over the house paddock. Sometimes (in the growing season) we can have up to 80-100 chickens over 4 acres. I believe that these guys also contribute to keeping the moth numbers down by eating the tasty caterpillars.*

*We also have a sizable frog population this year. We have a large deep frog pond (some might call it an in-ground swimming pool, but it has gone back to nature over the past 5 years) and a more shallow dam-style frog pond. We often find small frogs in the wet grass all over the farm including stuck on the windows eating mosquitos at night. I think the frogs probably would eat caterpillars too.*

*I used to pay my kids for cabbage moths too. 20c each was the going rate, but I should warn you, they add up fast. :)*

*So, in summary, my recommendations would include creating frog ponds, letting bantam/silky chooks into the garden and keeping vast numbers of chickens nearby.*

*Happy gardening,*

*Ava / Meg.*

## Letters

### **Dear Herbers of Lochac.**

*I wish to thank Master Cristoval for the work he has put into the Herb and Garden Guild over the past couple of years. Firstly producing the herb and garden guild newsletter and also performing the role of the head gardener since festival last year.*

*Wish to see yourself keep up the good work.*

*The anon. Herbalist.*



### **Dear Gardeners and Herbalists,**

*I and presumably all other members of the guild wish to congratulate Sigurd Trygvarsson as first herb and gardening peer of the Kingdom of Lochac.*

*May we ask for your sources of inspiration?*

*Herb Gardener*

### **Dear Lochac Gardeners.**

*It has come to our attention that a general meeting of the herb and garden guild to be valid has to have at least three members, of which one is required to be a guild officer.*

*The last meeting recorded with only Master Cristoval in attendance is not valid, and so the resolutions including Cristoval to be head gardener are also not valid.*

*Cristoval the Usurper is therefore requested to release his hold of the head gardenership so a new head gardener of the Herbers and Gardeners of Lochac can be chosen at the Annual General Meeting to be held at festival.*

*Surely the previous head gardener Brian le faucheur was aware of this and should not be allowed to be reinstated by having another step forward to be acclaimed head gardener by the membership.*

*At the annual general meeting, vote none of the above by assuming the easy duties of the herb and garden guild of lochac!*

*Anon. the Gardnener.*

# Annual General Meeting Herb & Garden Guild

## Rowany Festival XLII, 5 April 2010

Meeting opened 1.29pm

1. The meeting acknowledged and celebrated the recognition of Sigurd as a Master of the Laurel. Furthermore, he is appointed as a Guild Master of the Herb and Garden Guild. [Sigurd subsequently accepted a position as Patron of the Guild.]

2. **Officebearers:**

- Cristoval was appointed as the Head Gardener
- Cristoval was appointed as the Guild Chronicler
- Cristoval was appointed as the Guild Treasurer

3. In recognition of this extraordinary achievement, Cristoval will take the overall title of Lord Protector of the Guild for the next year, or will be known less formally as the Dear Leader.

4. The Guild Constitution has been suspended, but we will hold an AGM at Festival in 2011 so that guild members may acclaim the Dear Leader. May his reign endure for centuries.

5. The Dear Leader believes that Variegated Sneezewort is an abomination, and anyone found growing it will be considered disloyal and dealt with harshly. If you want to display your love for the Dear Leader and endorsement of His every thought, grow Parsley or Thyme.

6. As a kindness to all guild members, the Dear Leader announces a general pardon for all those who have been idle and slack in the past year, especially Cristoval.

7. The **guild projects** for the next year will be:

- having a garden area at next Festival like we used to
- having some seeds and possibly plants for sale at Festival market day
- having a book of cool things to do with herbs for sale at next Festival
- offers of assistance would be greatly appreciated.

Meeting closed 1.31pm.

**Attendance:** Cristoval