



THE AURORA

Hunter & Mead Moons, AS XXXIV (October/November 1999)

Greetings to Our Populace



Well, our first Silverwolf as Baron and Baroness is over. There was good fighting, fun, great food and a wonderful surprise at the end!!! The burning house scenario for rapier was interesting Dante!

We would like to congratulate His Lordship Hjalti and Magnus on their victories in

lists. Congratulations also to Master Eric the Trespasser on his second place finish. It was a battle well fought!

A thank you to Eric and his lady Cailleach, and Einar and his lady Svetllana for having the patience and good grace to deal with the camera crew.

The feast was excellent and we thank Arianrhod and Hilde for their extreme patience as the events of the day ran behind schedule. The suckling roast pig disappeared at an astonishing rate, even after people thought they were full!!!

Thank you to all those who contributed to the event; you know who you are!

Now it's time for us to jump on our little soapbox! Please, please send in recommendations! There are so many out there deserving of recognition and without your help they will not come to our attention. In the case of Baronial awards, send the information directly to us. For Principality awards and AOA's, send info to the Prince and Princess of Avacal (a copy for us for our records would be nice too!!) Kingdom level awards such as Jambes, Gouttes, Peerages, etc should go to the King and Queen of An Tir (again a copy for us). If we are in the know, then if these people contact us and ask about such and such person, we will be able to give them the info.

Hoping to see many of you at Vinfest.

Learning through trial and error (hopefully with fewer and fewer of the latter!!!!)

John and Kirstin
Baron and Baroness of Borealis

Silverwolf XX Champions

Silverwolf Champion of Sword

Hjalti the Wonder Viking

Silverwolf Champion of Arrows

Magnus Fayrhair



Known widely for his keen wit and great humor, Manus is well respected throughout the realm. His generous and friendly nature tends to disguise his deadly aim and Viking temperament in battle.

Magnus' culinary and brewing skills are legendary as any gentle from Vingaard will attest to.

He is currently serving as Man at Arms to Mistress Joan the Just, Yeoman of Borealis.

**Magnus at Avacal
Investiture**

Herald's Corner



Lord Æthelstan æt Karlioli

What is a heraldic device? Why can only metals be on color, and vice versa except when furs are involved? Can't tell sinister from rampant? Get all your answers from your very friendly Baronial Herald.

BOREALIS STANDING CALENDAR

	Veraquilon	Stonewolf	Vingaard
Monday	7:30 PM – Fighter Practice every week. 6:30 PM – Rapier Practice every week. 7:30 PM – Dance Practice/Music rehearsal on 2nd & 4th Monday of each month all at Stathern United Church (basement gym) at corner of 95 Ave. and 86 St.		
Tuesday		Arts & Science Classes 7:00 – 9:00 PM Cold Lake South Library	Rapier Practice 8:00 – 10:00 PM Grande Prairie Regional College Room L207
Wednesday	1st Wednesday of Month Capilano Community Hall <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business meeting @ 7:30 PM • Tavern Night @ 8:30 PM 		
Thursday		Fighter (Heavy and Rapier) Practice Grand Centre Elementary School 5:00 – 8:00 PM	
Saturday			Feasts – Generally the 2nd Saturday of each month, location varies. Contact Melisant de Alemanyne at: Dpearcy@telusplanet.net (780)538-3946
Sunday	Archery practice at Joan & Cennet's place south of Leduc in the afternoon when the weather is good and doesn't conflict with major events. Call 986-6623		Arts & Sciences gathering almost every afternoon at Sidonia & Magnus's house in Beaverlodge. Call (780)354-8733

There are several groups in the Barony dedicated to various activities:

- The Groaning Board is a cooking guild who puts on theme feasts throughout the year. You can contact Edwina of Loxley at MGARRISO@epsb.edmonton.ab.ca
- Our Medieval Dance troupe rehearses every two weeks and performs at various demos and events. Contact Mordecai Salzer at rms@cha.ab.ca or Catherine of the Rowan Tree at cjackel@freenet.edmonton.ab.ca
- We have a Fibre Arts guild called the Black Sheep Guild who get together to spin, weave, dye etc. You can contact Alyne of Kendal at lgottesf@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca
- There is a fighting household in Veraquilon known as the Lost Vikings. See them at:

<http://www.shades-of-night.com/lostvikings/>

AVACAL CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October 1999

02-03	Vin Fest	Vingaard
09-10	20th Anniversary Feast	Myrgan Wood
16	Theme Feast	Stonewolf

November 1999

06	Ferret's Feast	Valley Wold
27-28	Avacal Coronet	Windwyrn

December 1999

04-05	Yule Feast	Veraquilon
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January

08-09	Kingdom Coronation	TBA (An Tir)
15-16	10th Anniversary	Sigelehundas
22-23	Twelfth Night	Montengarde

February 2000

12-13	Feast of 12 Doves	Sigelehundas
19-20	Unknown (to be announced)	Myrgan Woo
26-27	Avacal Investiture	Sigelehundas

March 2000

12-13	Kingdom A&S	TBA (An Tir)
11-12	TBA	Willowmere (Prince Al-
25-26	Winter War	Borealis

April 2000

01	April Fools Tavern	Montengarde
15	Silver Arrow	Bitter End
22-23	Easter Ithra	Loch Dorr
29	TBA	Montengarde

THE FIRST KNIGHT OF AVACAL

You know Conrad and Aethelhere, Edward and Wolf-
here Rorik and Albrecht and Vik and Thorwulf. But
do you recall the most famous knight of them all?

(tune: Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer)

Thing, the short, squat, ugly one
Had a very furry pelt
And if you ever saw him
You would never see a belt
All of the other fighters
Used to laugh and call him names
They never let poor Thing
Join in any stick jock games
Then one muggy summer's night
Strider came to say
"Thing, with your honour bright,
Won't you amuse my family tonight?"
Oh how the Queen did love him
And the Prince cried out with glee
Strider did dub Thing knight then
The first of our history!

Thing was a two foot high, very fat, very ugly, very furry,
stuffed something-or-other. At the Sherwood Park Medieval
Days demo in summer of 1980, for being chivalrous to the
Queen, amusing the Prince (their son) and letting the King win
at chess, a (very drunk) King Strider made Thing a knight of An
Tir, the first in the region that one day became Avacal. Sir
Thing eventually answered the call of his Kingdom and went on
Crusade. He was never heard from again.

In January of 1997 at Montengarde's Twelfth Night Celebra-
tion, Sir Thorwulf Bjornsson meet a Lady who (like himself) had
also been at that demo and she told him that she had had
Thing's son (safely looked after for the past 14 years). Sir Thor-
wulf asked to meet "Little Thing" who had been looked after by
(or was looking after) the Lady's daughter. So impressed was the
Knight with Little Thing's virtue and the way he had followed in
his long lost father's footsteps regarding those virtues that raise
a man to knighthood, that in front of many witnesses did Sir
Thorwulf make Little Thing his Squire, thus bringing the family
lineage full circle.

To Anyone who disbelieves this story: we have pictures.

Taken from the Avacal Website:

<http://www.crater.com/avacal/introbardic.html>

DARYOLES

Daryoles (a.k.a. Darioles, Daryols), are a form of custard tart, dating back to at least the 14th century. The original sources give several recipe variations (and about as many spelling variations), from the basic small custard-filled cakes, to multi-coloured creations, to fruit- and spice-filled pies. The redaction below is courtesy of Monica Gaudio, from Master Huen Damebrigge of Wychwood's "Boke of Gode Cookery" website.

Daryols. Take creme of cowe mylke, oper of al-maundes; do perto ayren with sugur, safroun and salt. Medle it yfere. Do it in a coffyn of ii ynche depe, bake it wele and serue it forth."

Curye on Inglysch, Book IV, "The Forme of Cury", c. 1390 C.E.

Daryoles. Take Milke an Eyround, & thn fatte of the Freyssche brothe, Pepper and Safroun & Honey; dry thine coffyn, & cast thine mixture thereon & serve if forth.

Two Fifteenth Century Cookery Books. Harleian MS. 279. xxxix

Daryoles. Take wine & Fresh broth, Cloves, Maces & Marrow, & powder of Ginger & Saffron & let all boil together & put thereto cream (& if it is clotted, draw it through a strainer) & yolks of Eggs, & mix them together, & pour the liquor that the Marrows was seethed in thereto; then make fair coffins of fair paste, & put the Marrow therein, & mince dates & strawberries in time of year, & put the coffins in the oven, & let them harden a little; then take them out & put the liquor thereto, & let them bake, & serve forth.

Two Fifteenth Century Cookery Books. Harleian MS. 279. iiij

Daryoles : Modern redaction

3/4 c. cream
1/4 c. wine
1/4 c. milk
5 egg yolks + 1 egg
1 pint strawberries, cleaned and cut
1/2 c. chopped dates
1/2 c. honey
1/4 tsp each saffron & ginger
1/8 tsp each mace & ground cloves
2 baked pie shells

Take the milk, cream, wine, saffron and other spices, and bring to a boil. Remove from heat. Beat egg yolks and honey together and pour into cream mixture. Place the cut strawberries and dates in baked pie shells and pour cream mixture over fruit and into the shells. Bake at 400° F for 45 minutes.

Submitted by Salem

OFFICERS REPORTS

A reminder that all local officers are to submit their quarterly report to their respective branch officer 15 days before November 1, 1999 which makes the deadline

October 17, 1999



Vin Fest I

Council of Dreams

**October 2-3, 1999 Incipient Canton of Vingaard
Grande Prairie Alberta**

Vingaard wishes to invite the populace of An Tir to their First Annual Vinfest. It will be an indoor camping event featuring Ithra classes and a rapier Tournament. Saturday evening will feature a banquet (which is sure to bring honor to our name) and festivities. As a new canton, our goal is to offer hands-on ithras in costume making, armor/weapon construction and helm making. Classes and Tournament will be scheduled to facilitate fighters participating in both.

As a special event for the weekend, Vingaard's vinters are planning to make a batch of "vin juice" complete with the ceremonial crushing of the grapes. It shall be reserved and showcased at next year's fest.

Site Information: D-Coy Armories, 100 Street and 90 Ave. Grande Prairie Alberta Indoor and outdoor camping available Site opens Friday evening and will close Sunday afternoon

Site Fee: \$20 for the weekend - this includes 4 meals (Breakfast on Saturday and Sunday; Lunch and Feast on Saturday)

Tentative Schedule: Friday site opens, Saturday 8:00 - 9:30, Breakfast 9:00 -12:00 ithras, 12:00 - 1:00 Lunch 1:00-4:00 ithras, 4:30 -6:30 Rapier Tournament, 7:00-9:00 Banquet, 9:00 - ?? Bardic/Dancing on grapes and preparation of Vin Juice.

Sunday 9:30 - 10:30 Breakfast, 10:30 -1200 Impromptu ithras/meetings

Autocrat: Villiard of Monmouth (Lane Borstad)
(780) 532 0472, Lane@Borstad.com
Alternate contact: Melisant (Shanon Percy) (780) 538 3946, dpearcy@telusplanet.net

Feastocrat: Daffyd (Dave Percy) (780) 538 3946:
please contact for any food allergies

Ithra information/registration, Lady Margaret of Newark Abbey (403) 258-1604, wildwind@nucleus.com

Oyez, Oyez ! Let the Known World rejoice at the 20th Anniversary of the Barony of Myrgan Wood! This momentous occasion will be marked by our Champion's Tournaments of Arrow & Sword. The feast will feature items from Henry VI's Coronation feast, in keeping with the English Renaissance theme. Contests include best Myrgan Wood tale (good or bad!), renaissance costume, and calligraphy on '20'. An abundance of dancing, live music and revelry are planned !

Sunday will feature University of Avacal classes (listings TBA), a Rapier Tournament, and fighting seminars. A potluck feast will set the tone for a more informal evening of merriment as though it were the Manor Home of our Baron and Baroness.

Where : Ukrainian Federation Hall, Ave. 'G' North and 20th Street, Saskatoon, SK.

Directions :

From west : from HWY 7 : turns into 22nd St West. Turn RIGHT onto Ave. H, go two blocks south to 20th Street, turn LEFT, go one block to Ave. G.

From south or east : from HWY 11 OR 16 : stay on Circle Drive. Follow it WESTBOUND, until you cross over the bridge across the river. Your first set of lights is 20th Street. Turn LEFT, and travel 6 blocks to Ave. G.

Motel reservations (under 'SCA') by Sept. 15: Confederation Inn 3330 Fairlight Dr. (off 22nd St.W.) Ph: (306)384- 2882 - Fax (306) 384-0773 [\$47 - \$50 - pool, restaurant, hot tub, etc.] A reception and lunch will be held Friday evening at the motel.

Fees :

- Saturday feast and site - \$18; site only : \$5 . Limit of 150 feast tix. Cash bar.

- Sunday - site : \$5 and potluck item for 10 (travelers may buy out their contribution for an extra \$3).

*****Reserve by September 30*****

Autocrats :

Mistress Fabienne l'Accusee & Lord Philippe Sanschoix
[Kathi & Philippe]
(306) 244 - 0215
harpsichord@canada.com

Stonewolf's Theme Feast

October 16, 1999

Stonewolf (Cold Lake, AB)

Valhalla revisited! And the Bop 'n Die!

Once again, the populace is invited to Stonewolf's annual Theme Feast, held in Stonewolf on October 16, 1999. This year's theme is Valhalla Revisited! (We've been there before, but what a great place to go back to!)

Come and enjoy the Norse theme event with: a Norse Wrestling competition, sponsored by the dwarf; a mid-night axe throwing competition! (time may vary due to festivity enjoyment); spear the spare produce! (some loser raiding party brought back vegetables!)

Also, Baroness Adeline will also be hosting her 3rd Bop 'n Die Tournament -- fight and dice your way to a great treasury including confirmed prizes from HE Shamus, HE Thorwulf, HE Alfheim, HE Kirstin, HE Adeline, HL Matsuda, and more in the works! (All prizes have been donated or sold to Adeline at special prices!! Thank you to you all!)

Schedule:

site opens: 12:00 noon

Bop 'n die: 1:00 p.m.

Feast: 6:00 p.m.

Frivolities: expected all day!

Location: Cherry Grove Hall; located 5 minutes just outside of Cold Lake on highway 55 east towards Pierceland. The signs will be well placed as you near Cold Lake!

Cost: Feast and site: \$13 adults; \$7 13-16; 0\$ 12 and under site only: \$5 adults; \$3 13-16; 0\$12 and under No merchant fees for merchant tables

Please call autocrat(s) if you have concerns regarding food allergies, crash space, etc. Please register for the event by October 12.

Autocrat: HE Alfheim der Wundersman
(Stewart Hiar; 594 1083; ghiar@portagec.ab.ca)

Co-autocrat: Alexander Wallace (Matt; 594 8087)

Avacal November Coronet

November 26-28, 1999

Windwyrms (Lethbridge, AB)

Come one and all to Avacal's 8th Coronet Tournament to be hosted in the Shire of Windwyrms. Do you feel worthy to be Avacal's Next Prince? Do you know Someone who would like to be? Do you just want to have a great time? Then come on out! We have the whole YWCA to stay in for the weekend. Doors open at 8 PM Friday and close at 12 PM Sunday. Camping is permitted in the Hall so bring your free standing tents or sleep in the open. Showers are provided as well as a tavern style feast.

Site fee: \$10.00 for people over the age of 16. Gentles aged 5-15 cost \$5.00 those who are age 4 and under can come free with an adult.

Where: The YWCA in Lethbridge; 604 8th South

Directions:

From the North, West, and East: Best route to Hwy. 3 to Lethbridge. Turn south at the Stafford Drive exit and go south for about 6 blocks and turn west (right) on 6 Ave., go one block and you will see a Esso station on your right, the YWCA is on your left.

From the South: Take Hwy. 4 into Lethbridge and it will turn into Scenic Dr. Turn North (right) onto Mayor Magrath Drive and after a while turn west (left) onto 6ave. The YWCA will be on your left in about 20 blocks.

Contact info: Autocrat: Skeld the Peacemaker (Jeffrey Moore,) K418 3 Aperture Pk, Lethbridge AB. T1K 6T4 (403) 317-2843 email: moorjg@uleth.ca
Deputy Autocrat: Cecilia Drachman (Carole LeGrand) 921 19st South T1J 3H4 phone: (403) 328-7435 fax: 317-7969.

Tourney Format: Standard double elimination Tournament, all legal weapons acceptable, shields must be tournament sized, and edged.

Note: This is the YWCA we are being hosted at not the YMCA.

Viking Drinking Vessels

Heilsa, all!

While I've never seen costrels in the Scandinavian Viking Age documentation, in addition to skins for carrying beverages, the Vikings sometimes made actual canteens out of horn... you take a big horn, remove the solid end, cut it up one side, and boil until soft, then unroll it and press it flat with a heavy weight until dry: this becomes one side of the canteen later when cut into a disk. Do this again for the other side. A third horn is cut on a spiral pattern top give a long, 3" wide strip, boiled and then uncoiled... This strip is usually clamped around a round form of some sort. I haven't been able to disassemble one to find out how the horn edges are attached, but I'm guessing that they were sewn with sinew and glued, and then "caulked" with brewer's pitch. The joins are usually covered with glued-on rawhide, and often the sides of the canteen are lavishly scrimshawed.

Another interesting note about Viking drinking vessels... most people just assume that the Vikings always drank out of horns. Actually, the archaeological record indicates that most drinking vessels were *kasor* (sing. *kasa*), a type of bowl used primarily for ale. These bowls have a handle on either side (a modern survival is the "loving cup" type of trophy), often carved as a stylized bird with a head as one handle, the tail as the other. Sometimes both handles were animal heads, or just knotwork patterns. As anyone watching a drunken SCA Viking can tell you, a horn that cannot be set down is a liability when your sobriety is gone... Some scholars think that horns were used by the poor, and also in wealthier contexts for ceremonial purposes (although they might have been more prevalent during the Migration Age than they became by the actual Viking Age). A normal Viking feast would feature servers who draw ale from the brewing vat into pails or buckets. The ale was served from the bucket to the *kasa* by use of an "ale goose" a little dipper carved so that the curved handle represented the head of a goose or swan or duck. Finally, like any good two-fisted drinker, the Viking would grab one or both handles of the *kasa* and drink. Two handles increases your chances of hitting your mouth when your coordination is unsure... that's why training cups for small children are built that way!

Wassail,
::GUNNORA::

A 13th century-style Ransom Tournament

Setup: The fighting field should be large enough for the fighters to be fighting in small, separate melees but should have an open area big enough to hold a general melee of all fighters. At one end of the field set up the retreat, a roped-off area in which there will be no combat. There should be two entrances into the retreat, well-separated. Spectators can watch from the retreat, do it might be placed in front of a hill, bleachers, stage, etc.

Divide the fighters into two roughly equal teams, perhaps by regional origin. Combat will only take place between members of opposing teams. Once the tournament begins, fighters may enter the field as they see fit, singly or in groups. They may fight against members of the opposing team individually, in groups, or in a massed melee, as they see fit. It is most authentic to begin with a general melee of two opposing lines. Fighters may return to the retreat at any time to rest or to escape capture (though this last tactic is of questionable honor).

The object of the tournament is to take prisoners and win ransom. A ransom can be won in two ways:

1. If a fighter yields to his opponent, then he agrees to pay a ransom; the captured fighter is allowed to leave freely to seek other combat, and is on his honor to deliver his ransom later in the day.

2. If a fighter is subdued (i.e. "killed" in standard Society parlance), then he is captured. His captor must escort him to the retreat. Once they reach the retreat, the prisoner must pay ransom and wait ten minutes before returning to combat. The captor may return immediately. (The ten minute penalty is intended to discourage fighting to the "death" and to encourage yielding; make it longer or shorter to fit your circumstances. Ransoms can also be set higher to encourage yielding.)

Ransom can be set many ways. It could be pre-set by rank, with higher-ranking fighters worth greater ransom. It can be left to the fighters involved, with every fighter encouraged to bring suitable ransom to see himself through the day. The latter approach requires more advance publicity, and can offer an excellent opportunity for merchants. Ransom could be used as a score by which the best fighter of the day is chosen; if so, it is best accounted by the list officers in the retreat. Or the list officers can give a prize to the best fighter, without reference to ransom.

Advantages: Fighters get exactly as much fighting as they want, in whatever combinations they prefer, with essentially no interference from the list officers. The tournament requires minimal work to run: Enough marshals to oversee the combat, plus a few people in the retreat to assist in ransoming, time "death" penalties, etc. Spectators get to watch a variety of combat all day long. No set time limit; the tournament can continue until the fighters have had enough and can end whenever necessary to accommodate other activities of the event.

Disadvantages: No built-in climactic "final round". No built-in winner. The tournament can have slow points: Fighters tend to wear themselves out in the first half-hour, then take a long rest before returning to the field. The organizers can alleviate this problem by having entertainment ready to fill these gaps (which is exactly what happened in the tournaments of the early 13th century). The retreat can be a place for dancing, singing, and feasting rather than just a place to dump sweaty armor.

Arval

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From Stefan's Florilegium <http://www.obm.com/~lindah/rialto/tournaments-art.html>

Officers of the Barony of Borealis

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The Salt of the Earth

By Da'ved Man of Letters, Lord Xaviar the Eccentric.

The value of salt as a commodity has been known throughout history. It is very concentrated; being the source of the essential minerals sodium and chlorine. Salt is a biological necessity, proven by the evolutionary development of a specific set of taste buds to detect and enjoy it. When a human being perspires, he loses some of his natural body salts and these have to be replaced from the food he eats (Tann. 179). The want of salt far exceeds the need the body has for its ingestion. It is estimated that the average person consumes more than twenty-five times the necessary amount of salt. It is likely that this craving for salt brought about its' organized production.

Salt-winning is the term for the deliberate production of salt from seawater. Salt collection from naturally occurring sources was undoubtedly practiced for thousands of years before this process was discovered. Early in the Neolithic era, salt was used in bleaching, cleaning, and dyeing of fabric. It was also used in the degreasing, dehairing, and softening of leather, before during and after the invention of fabric. The early Romans used salt as money, (salarium = salt money or salt rations) though this practice was short lived. The Latin Words for "well-being" salus, and for "health," salubritas, both derive from the Latin sal, meaning "salt" (Schi. p.3).

Salt has been documented for medical, sacred, and culinary purposes, by many different sources. Salts worth as a medicine is praised by Claudius Galen (Galen of Pergamom A.D.E. 129-199), who recommended that one consume moderate amounts of salt food to encourage a flagging appetite. Pliny the Elder (Gaius Plinius Secundus A.D.E. 23-79, Aug.24) is noted as saying that the gods were especially fond of salt, hence their devotees presented it as an offering. This faded with time and a new fad arose of using perfumes. This was a sign of the intrusion of eastern customs and religions into the culture of the Greco-Roman world, Plutarch (Plutarchos A.D.E. 146-119) wrote: "First there is salt without which practically nothing is eatable." He also calls it a requisite to good dining. Ancient Greek coastal cities traded salt for slaves with their inland city-states. The need for salt inland grew as the sphere of Roman influence increased.

In the fifth century Cassiodorus (a Goth administrator) stated "It may be that some seek not gold, but there lives not a man that does not need salt." (Molm. 14-17). Salt became an international trade item as early as the Sixth century. The first salt monopoly is connected to the conquests of King Ancus Marcius (641-616 B.C.E.). He is recorded as establishing saltworks at Ostia on both sides of the Tiber river. The Roman government ceased control of these operations in 506 B.C.E. and banned all private salt production. Medieval Europe inherited the ideology of salt monopolies and taxes from the Romans. Salt was called the chief article of Venetian commerce and was produced in Murano and Chioggia. The Venetians had managed to make salt a major source of state revenue by controlling the trade.

Written evidence of salt production, trade and taxation during the Middle Ages is found in ecclesiastical records. This is congruent with most other aspects of Medieval history as the Church seems to have had influence everywhere. Salt making is historically one of the first monastic industries. Several Bishops of Salzburg became veritable entrepreneurs from the development of the salt trade and taxation.

In the early 12th century Venice became more a trader than producer and asserted control over the salt trade. Venice held the control of salt in the Mediterranean until the emergence of Genoa as an important trading city. Medieval Arabic cookery, with its leaning toward the sweet, had an effect upon the saltiness of European cuisine. This was one of many possible reasons that contributed to the unsalting of Europe during the early middle ages. When and why the waning of the use of salt occurred is different for various reasons. Cost, adherence to the whims of the crown, different cultures and geographical locations, all may have played a part.

The High Middle Ages saw an elimination of the use of garum and liquamen (salty fish sauce) from most of Europe. While the Arabic world never totally eliminated its use. The French reinvented garum using a fish called garon and was in commercial manufacture in the south of France. This might be a direct result of the heavy taxation on salt by the French government. Charles of Anjou (1225-1285) instituted a salt tax in Provence, to finance his conquest of the Kingdom of Naples (Mult. p 13). This begins to show how important salt was to the average person.

Renaissance scholars concluded that the ancients treated salt as a sacred substance, a medicine and as a condiment. The increase in the use of salt in the Renaissance was not due to its sacred quality or its medicinal value. It was a gluttonous society that promoted salt over all other condiments as an appetite stimulant.

The gourmets of the Renaissance imitated the Ancients by increasing its repertoire of salt-acid delicacies. Renaissance diners baited their appetites with salt fish, salt meat, and salt vegetables (Rabe. 83,575-7, bks I, IV). Francois Rabelais (Alcofribas Nasier 1494-1553, Apr. 9) wrote that Gargantua constructed a salad with oil, vinegar, and salt as an appetizer. This appears to be the first reference to salad dressings. He called fast days "jours maigres entrelardex" or "larded lean days," for the taking of salt-acid delicacies on a fast day was a hypocrisy. Renaissance diners were so fond of gorging on salt fish and salted fish eggs that physicians condemned this passion (Platina p 265). This had little effect on the diets of the wealthy.

The fourteenth century saw a general increase in northern European trade. Salted Herring had just recently been 'invented' by a Dutchman, Willem Benckels and was in big demand. This new commodity switched the source of salt from the Mediterranean to more local sources in the North Sea. The sources were the coast of England and the peat bogs of Holland. Toward the end of the fourteenth century, the Dutch depleted the peat and the English were depleting the needed fire wood for salt production. The English were also concentrating their economic growth on the textile industry. This shifted the production of salt once again. This time it was to buy salt a darker (dirtier) alternative mainly from France and Spain. By the end of the Middle Ages bay salt was the principal source of supply for northern Europe.

By the mid-sixteenth century, Jean Baptiste Bruyerin wrote that salt fish was as popular in his day as it was in ancient times. The types having been altered with time. There being a greater variety available now, for the gourmet to enjoy. In particular Bruyerin points out that the ancient did not have; "...herring, sturgeon eggs [caviar], botargo [other fish eggs] and other items brought from Constantinople to Italy." The spread of salt fish spread from Italy to France and was well received. Guido Panciroli claimed that caviar and botargo were being used in place of garum. It is odd though that Messisbugo and Scappi, two famous cooks of the day, do not use this substitution in their cookbooks. The late sixteenth century saw the spread of salt fish preparations into England. Caviar was being imported into Europe by the fourteenth century (Balducci, 103)

Salted meat became the standard rather than the exception. Bruyerin states that meat that has not been sprinkled with salt and is recently slaughtered will cause stomach upset and slow digestion. He goes on to state that beef is better with moderate salting. Louis Nonnius disagreed; by the next century he could report that much more fresh beef was eaten than fresh pork, which was not eaten by 'elegant people'." (Pete, 140)

Salted vegetables were enjoyed by both the powerful and commoner alike by the late sixteenth century. The modern cornichons of France are a left over of this time period. Cornichons are tiny cucumbers preserved in a salt and vinegar brine. Olives became very popular and became a much larger import than in ancient times. Salted capers became a table snack for stimulating the appetite. Nonnius wrote that artichokes "ought to be eaten with oil, garum, and coriander," but "some eat artichokes with salt only." (Nonnius p 408) He further wrote of capers and olives being used "...to incite much drinking."

It seems as though salt has lost some of its prominence. Going from gift to the gods to seasoning that even a peasant would not be without. But this has not diminished its use for as of 1973 World salt production was 165 billion kilograms; with an average household consumption of 7.5 kilograms per year. This breaks down to between 6 and 15 grams a day. This is almost 25 times the sodium needed along with more than enough chlorine, which is an important constituent of our gastric juice (and fluid regulator).

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FROM THE CHRONICLER

Greetings Friends,

As many of you are aware, I have assumed the responsibilities as Borealis Chronicler from the very capable hands of Lady Morgan of Devonview. I also wish to extend a very big thank you to Lord Æthelstan æt Karlioli who did a wonderful job as interim editor during this transition. I hope I can perform this job as well as Lady Morgan did during her time in office.

I should tell a little about myself as I have not the pleasure of meeting many of you. Having lived in the area all my life, I joined the Canton of Vingaard at its inception last January and have served as deputy chronicler for our newsletter, The Grapevine, with my lady, Sadb ingen Thuathail, for the three issues produced so far. An early period Irish Celt, I'm currently building a set of heavy armor so that I may someday fight for Borealis.

There is a change in production schedule for *The Aurora*. The monthly release will be modified somewhat to accommodate less activity in the winter and increased activity in the summer. The following yearly timetable will now be followed:

October/November
December/January
February/March
April
May

June
July
August
September

I hope I have put together an informative and entertaining newsletter. Comments are always welcome and definitely encouraged. I am always looking for articles, poems, songs or stories of any nature as long as the material is suitable for publication in a newsletter of this type. I am hoping to provide a Christmas/Yuletide theme for the next issue. Submissions with this theme are encouraged, but not required. Just keep them coming!

Yours In Service,

Finn O'Neill Selgaire



December/January Issue Deadline

November 15, 1999

Aurora Subscriptions

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ASCA, Barony of Borealis

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The Editors wish it known that any opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editors.

Revised 2/99