

Hurst & Horn

SEASONAL NEWSLETTER FOR THE KINGDOM OF ATLANTIA ROYAL FORESTRY GUILD

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Judocus of Brittany, Book of Hours Belgium, perhaps Bruges, ca. 1440 MS A.19 fol. 165v, The Morgan

Rehate: Working Together at Gardens of Thyme & Oakwood

BY ISOBEL OF CARNEWYTH, HIGH CHRONICLER

The time has come, we are finally getting back to regular events and the opportunity to work together as a Guild.

Gardens of Thyme & Oakwood took place last month, during a time of variable weather at Elchenburg Castle. Many of us planned for months, creating displays and classes, gathering garb and equipment.

However, life often intervenes, and several people were unable to attend due to illness or traveling difficulties, etc.

But the Guild carried on. Despite uncertain weather, we still were able to offer classes on medieval vegetables, cooking chicken over a fire, starting fires, green woodworking, and tarp shelters.

Some classes sadly had to be cancelled but others were able to be covered by other foresters on site.

Guild members also participated in the larger event, either running troll, taking primary on the evening bonfires, or displaying at A&S. Most of my time on



Warden Eirik's Guild banner in action.

Saturday was focused on the interactive Apothecary Display but I was also set up an informational table in Vingolf for the Guild and answer questions by several eager attendees.

The weekend overall was an exercise in preparation and flexibility. Forecasts for storms largely turned out to be false alarm (outside of an impressive downpour late Friday evening and periods of light sprinkling). Learning how to do storm lashing and bringing an extra tarp to keep my door entry watertight were two key preparations I made in advance, along with attention to gear.



Display with Guild information at Gardens of Thyme and Oakwood. A printed compendium of last year's Hurst & Horn was added to the display on Saturday.

Luckily, garb made of linen and wool are both good candidates for camping in the rain. I packed enough clothing and shoes to be able to change to dry gear multiple times and brought a wooden clothes drying rack. Being able to leverage modern weather forecasting was a welcome anachronism.

While foresters are encouraged to "weather" events and not break camp

early, sometimes that is unavoidable due to outside commitments or unsafe conditions. It's always good to have a back up plan in place.

Looking out for each other is also in our Oath, and as we grow in our Guild numbers and presence, we can more easily accomplish this by camping together. However, if numbers dwindle, we can still seek fellowship and

encourage safety by our members.

Remember, we are representing the Guild and are an example observed by others who may wish to join us and learn more about outdoor living and activities.

Some examples of good stewardship and fellowship included new member Finley's taking over an otherwise cancelled class and leaving the wood pile better supplied and more neatly arranged than he found it. Eirik taught and shared his candle box at A&S. Lorelei taught and fed many people down by the Lower Shelter with food from her classes. Asta worked troll and lent the use of her campsite (with its impressive fire pit) to the Guild. Kalara volunteered to judge A&S entries.

Communication is key as we move forward with events as a Guild group presence.

War of the Wings is on the horizon and in addition to our big Annual Moot, we have the opportunity to again work with Agriculturally-minded Atlantians.

Whether we offer classes on a solo basis or organize a more prominent demonstration village is up to us.

Organization, preparation, communication, and flexibility can

continue to make our Guild grow and thrive both for individuals and the group.

If you are interested in helping out with War of the Wings or any upcoming Officer vacancies as terms expire, please reach out, we welcome your voice and participation.

In service to the Hurst & Horn,
Isobel



A rainbow Saturday evening over a well-stocked wood pile.

Spring Moot Recap

BY ISOBEL OF CARNEWYTH, HIGH CHRONICLER

The Spring Moot was held live in the Kingdom of Atlantia Royal Forestry Guild Facebook group on March 20, 2022.

Finley Blackthorn from Sacred Stone swore his oath to the Guild and is now a full member.

Reports were then heard from officers as well as their planned event attendances.

High Warden Finnebreth shared the Forest of Stierbach overnighter and saunter as well as the planned Guild participation at Gardens of Thyme and Oakwood. Several new local Sauntering groups have formed since her Winter University class on how to start one.

High Chronicler Isobel shared the publication of the Spring Newsletter as well as providing an update on the Quarantine Challenge which has now closed.

High Preceptor Elias shared Guild teaching activities at Winter University and the planned track for Summer University.

The Ranger trials will be held this Fall and applications should be submitted to the Guild email address.

High Sheriff Johan, Warden of the North Margot, and Warden of the South Eirik shared upcoming events they will be teaching and participating in.

There was a brief discussion about timing of Saunters compared to other events. There is no particular policy about scheduling but rather based on the organizer's availability.

Several foresters planned to teach at Gardens of Thyme and Oakwood including Eirik and Finley.



Forestis Personae: Ideas for Roman impressions in the Forestry Guild

BY ELIAS DE BIRTON, FORESTER

While the ranks and organization of the Kingdom of Atlantia Royal Forestry Guild are based on the administration of royal forests in England at their height in the 13th and 14th centuries, all personas that incorporate elements of travel or wilderness use are welcome [1]. After all, the Atlantian guild was founded by a 1st century Celt, a 9th century Saxon, and a 12th century Irishwoman! However, some members may want to include elements of the role of late medieval Western European foresters into their persona, since it has had so much influence on the guild, but may be more interested in a different period or place. Fortunately, roles that have some functional similarity to English foresters can be found in many different times and cultures, especially when it comes to the management of natural resources. In this series of articles, I hope to provide some ideas for those interested in this approach!

In Roman law, wild animals were considered *res nullius* (“nobody’s thing”) until they were captured or killed, at which point they became

the property of the hunter [2]. This was true even when hunting on another’s land unless the landowner made an effort to prevent entry, thereby asserting ownership over the game animals within [2]. To this end, wealthy Roman gentry established game parks called *vivaria* [3] or *therotrophia* [4]. It was recommended that woodlands set aside for this purpose be fenced by a stone or clay brick wall, or, if a very large or mountainous area was to be enclosed, by a post fence of oak, and that the deer and boar kept within be monitored and fed by a *custos vivarii*, or park-keeper [5]. A similar duty was assigned to the wardens of English royal forests – they were to see that the King’s deer were fed during times of scarcity (although it seems likely that this task was actually carried out by their subordinates) [6].

In addition to game parks, the term *vivarium* was also used to describe an animal preserve or enclosure that was stocked with exotic animals; these were maintained by the emperor [7] or aristocrats [8]. Private animal exhibitions may have been staged by members of the Roman political elite [8] while imperial *vivaria* provided animals for public spectacles such as the wild beast hunts (*venationes*) in the arena [7]. Animals destined for the arena were likely captured by specialized soldiers in the Roman army; an inscription found in modern day Bulgaria

dated to the 2nd century CE reports the successful capture of bears and bison for an imperial venatio [9], and a soldier of an auxiliary regiment reports “hunting all species of wild animals and birds for a year” in Egypt and sending what was caught elsewhere in a letter dated to the late 1st or early 2nd century CE [10]. *Venatores immunes* (hunters granted exemption from some military duties [9]) likely performed these tasks. Other soldiers with similar specializations include *vestigatores* (“trackers”), some of whom focused on large felines, and *ursarii* (“bear hunters”) [9]. While Roman military personas can easily incorporate the guild’s focus on travel and living out of doors (more so than late medieval forester impressions!), developing an impression around one of these specialized roles could align a Roman soldier persona even more closely with the Forestry guild’s purpose.

Many different impressions can include elements of travel or wilderness use, so most who wish to join the Kingdom of Atlantia Royal Forestry Guild do not need to develop a new persona! However, learning more about *custodes vivarii* and *venatores immunes* might provide a way to incorporate concepts somewhat related to medieval forestry into the development of a Roman persona.

1. Davis, Jennifer. 2017. "NEW MEMBERS PLEASE READ! Herein lies information about the guild..." Facebook, January 11, 2017. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/AtlantiaRoyalForestryGuild/posts/1006147129532066/>.
2. Goldberg, Eric Joseph. *In the Manner of the Franks: Hunting, Kingship, and Masculinity in Early Medieval Europe*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020.
3. Laing, Michelle. "The Boar in Art History." Special Collections & Archives. University of Waterloo, published March 9, 2018. Accessed May 30, 2022. <https://uwaterloo.ca/library/special-collections-archives/exhibits/celebrating-boar/boar-art-history>.
4. Varro, Marcus Terentius (c. 37 BCE). “On Agriculture, III, XIII,” In Marcus Porcius Cato on Agriculture, Marcus Terentius Varro On Agriculture, translated by Harrison Boyd Ash, 492-495. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960.
5. Columella, Lucius Junius Moderatus (c. 70 CE). "Book IX, I," in *On agriculture*, translated by Harrison Boyd Ash, 420-427. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1941.

6. Grant, Raymond. *The Royal Forests of England*. Wolfeboro Falls: Alan Sutton, 1991.

7. Lindberg, Nicholas, "The Emperor and his Animals: The Acquisition of Exotic Beasts for Imperial Venationes," *Greece and Rome* 66, no. 2 (2019): 251-263.

8. Epplert, Christopher. "Chapter 34: Roman Beast Hunts," in *A Companion to Sport and Spectacle in Greek and Roman Antiquity*, edited by Paul Christesen and Donald G. Kyle, 505-519. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014.

9. Epplert, Christopher. "Chapter 5: The Infrastructure of the Arena," in *Gladiators & Beast Hunts: Arena Sports of Ancient Rome*. Barnsley: Pen and Sword Books, 2015.

10. Epplert, Christopher. "The Capture of Animals by the Roman Military," *Greece & Rome* 48, no. 2 (2001): 210-222.

11. The Great Hunt Mosaic. 4th century CE. Mosaic. Villa Romana del Casale di Piazza Amerina, Sicily



Capture and transport of exotic animals is depicted in a 4th century Roman mosaic [11].

What to look for in buying a used axe

BY EIRIK GRÁLOKKR, FORESTER

The axe is perhaps the oldest tool in human history; bifacially worked stone 'hand axes' date back to the early paleolithic, some 1.5 million years ago, and remained in use over hundreds of thousands of years of early human history. Despite their name, there is no evidence these tools were hafted for use like the axes we know today, and they likely were a multipurpose tool held in the hand for digging, butchering, processing materials, and many other uses.

Fast forward plus or minus a million years after the creation of this artifact, and human culture has developed metal tools, first in copper and bronze, and later in iron and steel. We are fortunate here where I live, in the eastern U.S., in that many excellent iron and steel hand tools have been used here for the last few hundred years. Many of these tools can be found at relatively little cost through yard sales, flea markets, junk dealers, and even antique shops, if a person knows what to look for and is willing to put in a little effort. As a blacksmith and forester, I appreciate that many tools we think of as old—over around a hundred years or so—are often very close in form and construction to



Hand axe, from Ur, Iraq. Paleolithic. Displayed for the very 1st time in February 2021. Sulaymaniyah Museum, Iraq. Not seen since excavated by Sir Woolley in 1931/1932. cc4.0 from Wikimedia Commons.

those of a thousand or more years ago. So, because the axe is such an important tool for foresters everywhere, I wanted to share some tips for finding and putting an old axe back into use. But first, a bit more information (ha—a bit! That's the name for the axe's sharp part).

There have been thousands of types of axes developed for different purposes and in different cultures and environments. What most people today think of as an axe today is a felling axe, designed primarily for cutting down trees and chopping wood.



Felling axe

The North American version of this tool is characterized by a relatively heavy poll or butt, the flat side opposite the bit or sharpened edge. It often has 'ears' or lugs, at least on the handle side. There is an eye, the hole parallel to the bit through which the haft or handle is fixed. On each side behind the bit are the cheeks; the bit itself has a toe (the end away from the handle) and heel (the end toward the handle) The bit may also have a beard, the part where the edge drops below the main body of the tool, and which gives the name to the famous bearded axes of the Viking era.

Old axes often are missing the handle or have a handle that is in such poor condition that it would be unsafe to use. Sometimes the head has been rehafted but is upside down, which looks odd. Here I mostly focus on the head, as rehandling an axe is a topic for another article.

There are two things to consider right away. First, is there any obvious damage, and if so, how easily can it be repaired? The most common damage is mushrooming on the poll or other edges, usually from where it has been hit with a metal hammer. You can see on both axes shown here that some mushrooming has been filed away. It is important to be sure any



Axe head, labeled.

cracks that may have started to form on the mushroomed part are not too deep to remove by filing or grinding.

Note that splitting mauls (these look like a very fat axe and usually have a round rather than oval eye) are made to be hit with hammers, but axes are not; an axe should only be hit with a wooden object if it needs to be driven in, as for example to finish splitting a tough piece of wood into kindling. More serious damage takes the form of cracks or large chips, which may result from abuse or occasionally from a manufacturing flaw (see photo at right for an example of an otherwise lovely 19th century hewing axe with a seriously cracked bit; this piece was barely still attached to the rest of the axe!).

Second, assuming any damage is not a deal breaker, is the edge symmetrical, or is it sharpened only on one side, like a chisel? The chisel grind usually indicates an axe designed for hewing or shaping wood, while a symmetrical grind is designed for chopping. The cracked hewing axe above has a chisel grind, while my felling axe has a symmetrical grind. If an axe has been abused, it may have started with a chisel grind and then been ground on the back side in a misguided effort to sharpen it; if there's only a little damage it probably can be fixed, but if it's substantial, it may be better to look for a different one.



Hewing axe with cracks.

More advanced things to consider are the construction, and how much life is left in the bit. Older axes (19th century and earlier) may have a tool steel edge forge welded to a body made of mild steel or wrought iron. Sometimes it is possible to see where the steel ends, while in other cases the steel may extend all the way to the eye. If there originally was only a small steel section, over time it may have been sharpened away or sharpened past the hardened zone. Even on more recent axes made of a single piece of steel, I have seen some that are missing an

inch or more of their original edge due to repeated sharpening. This not only makes it difficult to restore the appropriate edge profile—because the body is thicker—but it too may have been sharpened past the heat-treated part of the edge, and into the much softer metal of the body. If it looks like a lot of the original edge is gone, it's probably better to look for a different axe instead.

The quality of new axes in the big box stores is not great, whereas most antique axes were made at a time when people depended a lot more on the functionality of the few tools they had and when manufacturers such as Collins often were trying to distinguish themselves on the basis of the high quality of their products. For these reasons, I usually prefer an old axe that has been restored over a new one from the store. Old axes also can be much less expensive, often working out to less than \$20 for the axe and new handle combined. That said, there also are some very good new axes on the market from specialty manufacturers such as Gränsfors Bruk that are likely as good or better than any antique tool, but one must be prepared to pay handsomely for this level of quality.

So what are you waiting for? Go get yourself an axe and put it to use!



Gorleston Psalter BLL Add Ms. 49622, f. 180v



Labors of the Month: November, 16th. c. woodcut

Labors of the Year: Summer

BY ISOBEL OF CARNEWYTH, FORESTER

Summer brings us to the months of June, July, and August with hot dry weather for much of Europe.

Common iconographic depictions for summertime focus on harvesting: June for hay, July for wheat, and August continuing with wheat threshing or picking fruit. Regional variations may focus on more locally prevalent crops such as vineyards or vary the timing based on variations of latitude, such as with sheep sheering or weeding.



The Labours of the Months: June, Venetian, oil on canvas, c. 1580



June: Mowing hay, from a French Book of Hours, vol 1. 229ff, Trinity College B.11.31



June (harvesting) from Perugia, the Fontana Maggiore (Main Fountain), sculpted after 1275 by Nicola Pisano and Giovanni Pisano. Picture by Giovanni Dall'Orto, 2006.



July from "Cycle of the months" fresco (1400 c.)
Of Torre Aquila of the Buonconsiglio Castle in
Trento, attributed to the Bohemian master
Venceslao



July from Cassiobury Park, ca. 1450-1475



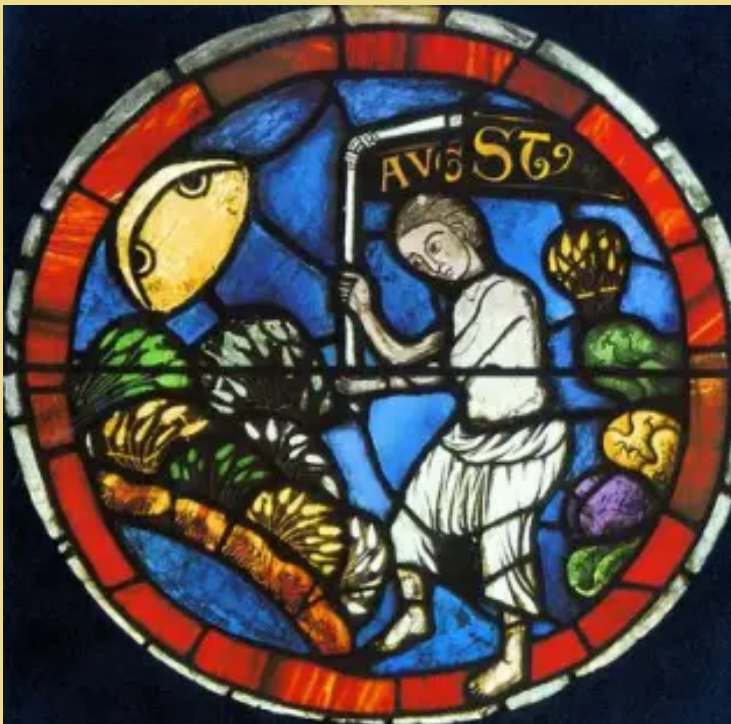
July: Shearing sheep and scything wheat. from from
the Tres Riches Heures Condee MS. 65 f7_V.



August: Threshing from 15th c. Codex Schürstab, Zentralbibliothek, Ms. C 54, p. 13r



August: Harvesting near a river. (Bruges), 1520-1530, Workshop of Simon Bening B.L. Add. 24098



August from Lausanne cathedral – South rose window, 13th. c.

Upcoming Events

Summer Moot is cancelled due to no planned business.

Various officers are planning to be at the following events and are available for oaths or skill displays:

Storvik Novice: July 8-10, 2022 in Upper Marlboro, MD.
<http://novice.storvikevents.org/>

Pennsic War: July 29- Aug 14, 2022 in Slippery Rock, PA.
<http://www.pennsicwar.org/>

Royal Archer/ Trial by Fire: Sept 9-11, 2022 in Glen Arm, MD.
<http://www.eventatbrighthills.com/>

University of Atlantia Fall Session Sept 17-18, 2022 in Mineral, VA on Saturday and virtual on Sunday.

<https://university.atlantia.sca.org/>

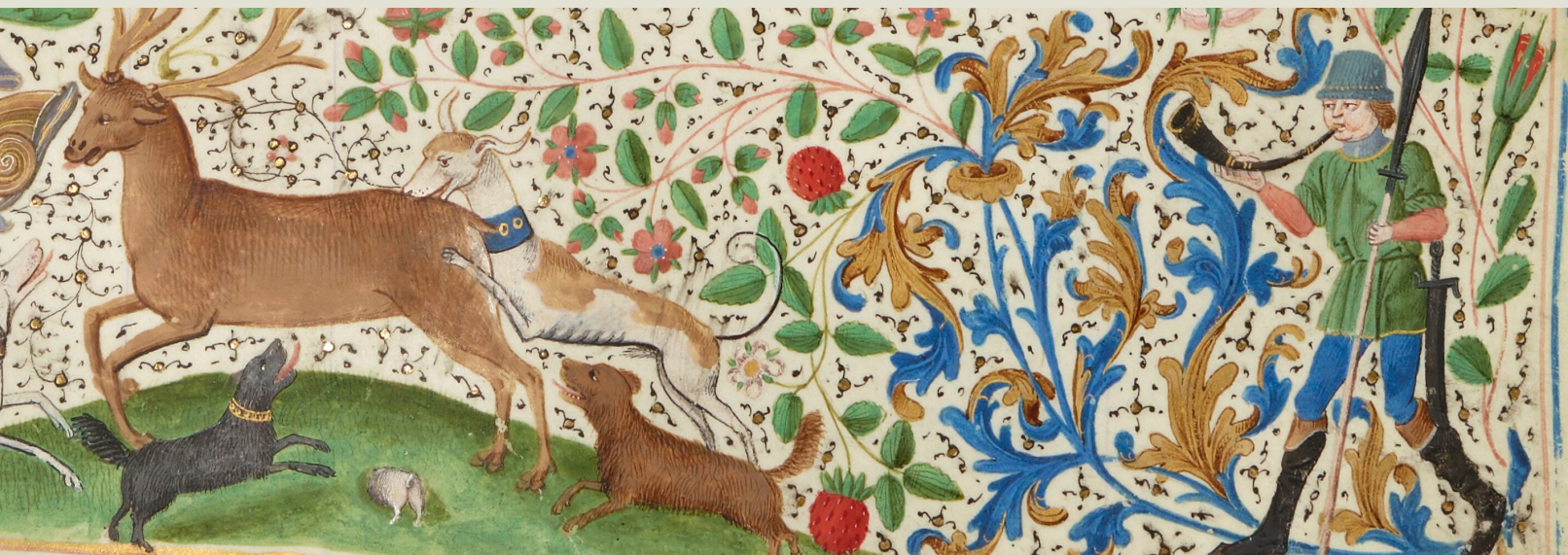
Silver Chalice: Sept 24, 2022 in Harleyville, SC. https://atlantia.sca.org/event/?event_id=329d8350

Stierbach Baronial Birthday: Oct 8, 2022 in Spotsylvania, VA.
https://atlantia.sca.org/event/?event_id=9e785773

War of the Wings (Annual Moot): Oct 11-16, 2022 at Elchenburg Castle in Boonville, NC.
<https://warofthewings.atlantia.sca.org/>

See <https://atlantia.sca.org/calendar/> for information on these and other events.

Chroniques sire Jehan Froissart : 1401-1500 Français 2643 folio 207r. Source gallica.bnf.fr / Bnf



Contact Information

Guild websites:

<https://karfg.weebly.com/>

https://www.wiki.atlantia.sca.org/index.php?title=Kingdom_of_Atlantia_Royal_Forestry_Guild

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/AtlantiaRoyalForestryGuild>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvryzA24YqXKsbiamMcsZGg>



The Atlantia Forestry Guild is devoted to research, recreation, and education of forestry and outdoors skills regarding no trace camping, protecting the green spaces, self-reliance, wood craft, camp craft, bush craft, overland travel, inland water travel, outdoor cooking, survival, and other outdoor and primitive skills all in period fashion. It is the purpose of guild to research, recreate, educate and demonstrate historical tools, methods, equipment and techniques for living, camping, traveling and cooking, in the outdoors or in wilderness locations.

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