

HERBAL GUILD OF MERIDIES CHARTER

Purpose

The Herbal Guild of Meridies is dedicated to researching and re-creating the arts and skills of herbalism from pre-17th century Europe, which shall be referred to as medieval or period herbalism herein. The Guild shall promote the study and use of herbs in a medieval context and provide information in the period cultivation, history and utilization of herbs to the populace. The medieval applications of herbs as culinary, cosmetic and medicinal agents and dyes are among the commonly explored areas of the Guild.

Membership in the Guild may be obtained by showing interest and becoming involved with promoting medieval herbalism within the Kingdom of Meridies. Interested individuals must simply express their desire to join the Guild and submit their contact and membership information to the Guild Steward.

The Meridies Herb Guild online discussion group is currently located at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/herb_guild/ and is a general purpose discussion list hosted by the Guild to promote period herbalism. Official Guild announcements are also made on the list, and Guild members are encouraged to remain in contact with each other via the online discussion group for planning and informational purposes, such as coordinating event activities and formal meetings, developing class outlines, assembling gifts for the Crown's use or redistribution and proposing subjects for discussion.

Members are encouraged to grow and share their knowledge not only within the Guild, but also within the Kingdom and Known World at large. Members may contribute to this cause by performing activities such as teaching classes, entering Arts & Sciences competitions, hosting informational herbal teas and demonstrating period herbalism at events (such as the giving of herbal largesse items or performing handwashings). Informal meetings, functions, and classes may be scheduled at any member's discretion.

DISCLAIMER: Membership or rank within the Guild does not imply qualification for the practical application of herbs medicinally or otherwise. Any actual practice of herbalism, including any inspired by the Guild, is at the risk of the practitioner. Please verify any health or safety information on herbal practices with other sources and/or with a qualified health professional.

Ranks

Guild members interested may attain recognized levels of experience within the Guild. Participation in the ranking system is on a voluntary basis. Rank in the Guild is not a requirement for membership or teaching classes nor bears any precedence. The four ranks are listed below.

- **Neophyte** - Any person who demonstrates an interest in becoming involved with promoting herbalism within the Kingdom of Meridies will be initiated into the Guild at this rank. Neophytes are associated with the herb ginger, as their attitude towards learning should be lively and vigorous at this level.

The higher ranks may be attained by demonstrating knowledge of period herbalism amongst the following four categories:

- Culinary
 - Cosmetic
 - Medicinal
 - Dyes
- **Strewer** - A person who demonstrates general knowledge of the cultivation of herbs prior to 1600. A strewer should be able to identify and show general knowledge of 6 herbs from 2 of the above categories. Strewers are associated with the herb dandelion, as this is a common herb known to many but requires a basic knowledge to work with.
 - **Kitchener** - A person who demonstrates extensive knowledge of the cultivation and uses of herbs prior to 1600. A kitchener should be able to identify and show extensive knowledge of 12 herbs from 3 of the above categories. Kitcheners are associated with the valuable herb saffron, as this is an herb with uses in all four categories above and takes considerable effort and knowledge to master.
 - **Sage** - A person who is not only a kitchener, but is experienced and knowledgeable enough to teach herbal classes. A sage should have knowledge of at least 24 herbs, at least 6 from each of the 4 named categories, and must maintain active teaching status by teaching a minimum of one class annually.

The Steward and at least one other Guild member may award the rank of neophyte. Arrangements to test for each rank above neophyte may be made through the Steward. To attain rank members may submit papers, presentations, recipes, demonstrations or medieval herbal products or other evidence of knowledge and dedication consistent with the goals of the Guild. Every effort will be made to find three or more members of the Order of the Velvet Owl, Order of the Laurel or experts in the field to critique as panel members. A panel of two may sit if three or more panelists cannot be found. Verbal questioning about the fields of interest will likely accompany examination of the submissions. The examination will be open to all other members of the Guild present.

Educational Requirements

The Guild will sponsor one or more classes at the Royal University of Meridies (RUM), Gulf Wars each year. These classes will be RUM certified classes from the Herbal Tract of the School of Culinary Sciences or officially recognized Guild classes.

Instructors wishing to receive RUM credit for classes must submit the required synopsis to the Dean of Culinary Sciences within the Royal University. The approval of RUM classes is at the discretion of the Dean of Culinary Sciences, and the guidelines of the Royal University must be followed concerning certification.

Official Guild classes must also have a brief synopsis of the subject material submitted to and approved by the Guild Steward prior to the class. This is for record keeping purposes as well as content approval and only applies to official Guild-sponsored classes. This synopsis must include, but is not limited to, one period source or reference. Sources may include but are not limited to written documents or archeological finds prior to 1600. This is necessary to comply with the Guild's purpose of the study and advancement of the herbal arts as practiced during the time period ascribed to by the Society for Creative Anachronism. All classes that meet the above requirements and approval may be announced as official Kingdom Guild classes and may be taught at any sanctioned event, meeting or demo as such.

All members of the Guild are strongly encouraged to teach classes within their levels of expertise at events, meetings and demos. Guild members may teach unofficial classes at any time. These classes do not have to be approved prior to teaching and are not required to follow guidelines of the Kingdom Charter. However, unofficial classes will not be sanctioned by the Guild.

All Guild members are encouraged to post notices for official and unofficial classes on the Guild online discussion group to generate interest and inform members. Official level classes should be posted as soon as they are approved and scheduled. Instructors are encouraged to post class handouts and articles of interest in the files section of the discussion list.

Officers

Officers of the Guild must be paid members of the Society. General announcements and posting to the online discussion group of vacancies or changes of office should be made 30 days prior to filling the position. Vacancies will be filled with a vote of confidence by the position deputy or by a new applicant if a deputy does not ascend to the position.

Steward - The Steward is the acting head of the Guild. This member will be responsible for organizing Guild meetings and sponsored activities. The office will maintain all records and correspondence for the Guild including all written reports and a master roll of all Guild members.

The Guild Steward (or his/her designated representative if (s)he cannot attend) will meet once a year, usually at Kingdom Arts & Science Fair (KASF), with the Kingdom Minister of Arts & Science (KMOAS) and/or the Kingdom Deputy for Guilds. The Guild Steward/Representative shall be prepared to present a verbal report on Guild activities over the course of the previous year. A written report summarizing this information should be forwarded to the Kingdom Deputy for Guilds no later than June 21st of each year. In the event that the annual meeting does not take place at KASF, the KMOAS will specify a date for the meeting; the Steward's written report should be post-marked/date-stamped no later than 14 days following the meeting.

Deputy Steward - The Deputy Steward is responsible for continuing to encourage and lead the Guild while preparing and learning to eventually take over for the Steward. The Deputy Steward will succeed the Steward, with a vote of confidence, should the office become vacant.

The length of tenure for the Steward and the Deputy Steward will be two years. Renewal of the tenured officers may be allowed by a vote of confidence by the Guild members.

Additional offices including but not limited to the following may be filled as needed by the Steward:

Regents – The Regents will be responsible for encouraging growth and development of the Guild within their regions.

Webmaster, Chronicler, Historian – These are self-explanatory offices.

Official Guild Business

Annual Guild Meeting - The Meridian Herb Guild will hold its annual meeting at KASF or a designated event as soon as possible afterwards. Members may discuss changes to Guild structure, communication sources, and other official business during this meeting. Members unable to attend may post their concerns to the online discussion group 2 weeks before the meeting to be added to the agenda for discussion. Other official meetings can be held at any sanctioned event at the request of any Guild member upon approval by the Steward. Official meetings should be announced and posted to the online discussion group thirty days prior to the requested date of the meeting to generate interest. Minutes should be taken and posted on the online discussion group within two weeks of the meeting. Unofficial meetings and functions need no prior approval and may be posted as general announcements to the online discussion group to generate interest and may be held at the member's discretion.

Voting - Motions to vote on business items may be made and seconded by Guild members at official Guild meetings. Official Guild meetings must be announced at least one month in advance on the on-line discussion list and by other means suitable, such as Kingdom Officers' mailing lists. Official Guild meetings must be attended by the Steward or the Deputy Steward.

Motions will require a 2/3 majority vote to pass. Absentee voting will be allowed from Guild members not able to attend. Members will be notified of the motions put to vote by on the on-line discussion list within one week of the meeting. Thirty days will be allowed from the date of the posting for absentee voting.

Recognition of Local Chapters of the Guild

The Kingdom Herb Guild encourages the formation of local Chapters of the Herb Guild of Meridies throughout the Kingdom.

Those wishing to be recognized as official branches, shall be blanketed under the Kingdom Herb Guild Charter if approved by the Kingdom Arts & Sciences office and the Steward. The local Chapters may function independently or in conjunction with the Kingdom Guild at their own discretion. Additionally, they may simply follow the guidelines laid down by the Kingdom Charter and the office of Arts & Sciences, or they may develop their own additional set of guidelines and structure as long as they work within the guidelines of the Kingdom Charter and the office of Arts & Sciences.

Local Chapters of the Guild will be officially recognized after meeting the following requirements:

1. A letter of intent to form a local Chapter and a list of members and requests to fill offices is to be sent to the Kingdom Herb Guild Steward along with a general statement concerning their goals in the studies of the herbal arts. Upon approval by the Kingdom Arts & Science office, these groups will then officially be granted status as active local Chapters of the Guild.
2. They shall report annually to the Kingdom Herb Guild Steward. These local Chapters may focus on general studies or may concentrate on a specific area of study concerning the herbal arts. They shall fall under the Kingdom Charter and be listed as active as long as they maintain a current membership list and report activities annually to the Kingdom Steward. This information is required thirty days prior to the annual meeting, so that it may be submitted as part of the annual Guild report.