



Myrtleholt
of The Kingdom An Tir

THE LEAFLETTE

The official newsletter of the Shire of Myrtle Holt • JUNE 2015 (AS L)

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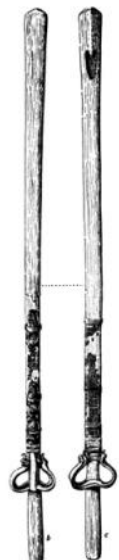
Hocktide's Atlatlists at Play



CALL FOR CONTENT

Lords and Ladies,

Give your Chronicler your art, your crafts, your photos, your stories! Don't be shy!





The Fallen: Sharon Lee Billman McElyea Coots

Shared By Viscountess Jennet MacLachlan of Loch Fyne

1941-2009

Sharon Lee Billman was born on September 13, 1941 in Southern California to Doris Rosella Billman (born McCormick) and Bernard Billman. She had one full sibling in her brother Bernard Chester Billman (known as Chet) as well as a half brother named Clyde.

Sharon attended Culver City High School until the last couple of months of her senior year when her father moved her to a different high school. However, Sharon always thought of herself as a Culver City High School student since that was where all her friends were and she would always attend their reunions as her own.

Sharon would draw pictures from as far back as anyone can remember. She always loved artistic things from drawing to painting, jewelry making and silversmithing amongst others. She was well known for her incredibly beautiful charters and scrolls and at the time this dedication was originally published, held the record for the most charters ever painted within the An Tir Kingdom.



After Sharon graduated from High School she took some college classes, mainly Art and Childhood Development and Education. Around 1958 Sharon married Bill McElyea but after approximately 13 years they went their separate ways. During her marriage to Bill they traveled around the country mostly on motorcycle (a blue and white Indian). In 1968 Sharon visited Cave Junction, OR. Sharon loved parties and found herself one night without a ride home. She made a choice to accept a ride home, despite her better judgment, while wearing only a pair of shorts and sandals. Unfortunately, the motor cycle was unable to make it around a tight bend in the road and they were thrown off. Her leg was severely injured in this accident and this injury was to bother her for the rest of her life.

When Sharon was in her early 30's she decided that she really wanted to have a child. She was living in Venice Beach, California at the time. She had been told by doctors that she would probably never be able to have children because of her health. However, this was not to deter her. Sharon found a suitable man, Joseph Stewart, who was smart and good looking and together they had one daughter, Joyea. Unfortunately, this relationship was not meant to be and

when Joyea was 2 years old her father left. So Sharon and her mother, Doris, raised Joyea together in Doris' house in Woodland Hills. Sharon worked nights and Doris worked days so that they were able to raise Joyea together. At this stage she was working on computer mother boards for a company called Graphic Research. Employees were all working with solder, which was to later be responsible for the Emphysema that Sharon developed. At the time the dangers of breathing in solder fumes were not known. This work was also a tremendous strain on the workers' eyes.

Finally in October 1983 (when Joyea was 9) the doctor told Sharon that she had to change her lifestyle. The fact that she was working between 2 and 3 jobs and consuming large quantities of caffeine and candy bars was going to kill her if she did not make some changes. So Sharon and Joyea decided to move.

During her school years Sharon had become friends with Joan Tromler, "Bunny", who was to remain her life-long friend. Sharon had decided that she was either going to move to New Mexico or to Oregon because her friend, Bunny, was living in Cave Junction, she decided to move to Oregon. It was during her time living in Cave Junction that Sharon became very good friends with Joan's mother-in-law who was mother to Steven Coots. Joan was married to James who was Steven's brother. Sharon bought a piece of land outside of Cave Junction and was living with her daughter, Joyea, in a Gipsy wagon on the property. However, the property had no running water and so they had been using the facilities at the Coots residence. Consequently Sharon and Steven's mother became very good friends.



The Fallen: Continued

Sharon Lee Billman McElyea Coots

Steven Coots, who at the time was married to LaRonda, filed legal "Separation with Intent to Divorce" papers in 1985. Since LaRonda had disappeared, and her whereabouts could not be determined, the legal divorce could never be finalized. At this time Steven had moved to Bakersfield in California. Steven's mother called and invited him to a Mother's Day celebration at her house. She was sneakily setting up a meeting between Sharon and Steven. Although they had met on a prior occasion they were not well acquainted. This meeting went very well and the two decided that they really liked each other. So in 1986 Steven moved in with Sharon and the three, Steven, Sharon and Joyea, began their lives together. At this time Sharon owned a red pinto runabout and Steven coincidentally owned a white pinto and so the two became nicknamed the "Pinto Beans". It was only years later in December 1993 that LaRonda died and Steven was finally legally free to marry again. Steven and Sharon married on October 1st, 1994.

In the year 2000 Doris, Sharon's mother, who had just turned 80, moved in with them and still lives with Stephen. They had bought a manufactured home and now had running water and proper facilities. The gypsy wagon had become a workshop and still remains on the property. Then in 2007 Sharon and Steven adopted Beth who was Steven's niece. Her family life had become dysfunctional and Steven and Sharon felt that they could make a difference. And so the family grew and expanded yet

again when Patrick (Joyea's stepson) also came to live with them.

Sharon and Steven were a very large part of the SCA and became very valued members of the Myrtle Holt shire for many years. Sharon started out as a member of "Caverns Gate" in 1995 and was treasurer for Caverns Gate Shire at the time that the shire was shut down. Some of the members remaining from Caverns Gate moved to Myrtle Holt around 1999 and Sharon became the treasurer for Myrtle Holt. She continued to hold this position for 10 years before the SCA rules were changed and positions were restricted to a limited service time period. From this point on she alternated with Monica Drake as Exchequer. Then in 2007 Sharon was approached by Summits and asked to be their "Scribe". Sharon accepted and held this position until her death in December 2009. She was nicknamed "Granny Grimm" during her early days in Myrtle Holt when she told everyone, in no uncertain terms, that there would be no shenanigans within the group as long as she was a part of it. She would threaten anyone stepping out of line with her cane and so earned her loving nickname of "Granny Grimm" or to most of us just "Granny".

Sharon earned numerous awards during her years as a valued member of the SCA. She was given the following awards over the years :

Award of Arms, Sep 27, 2003

Grail of the Summits – A&S
Jun 18, 2005

Grail of the Summits – Service,
Jun 18, 2005



Goutte De Sang –Dec. 10, 2005

Jambe de Lion –Mar 17, 2007

Gryphon's paw –Jun 21, 2008

Berberie –Jun 21, 2008

She was also the first to be awarded the Vendor's Byzantine award at Egils for her efforts and raising money for Myrtle Holt and Summits by baking and selling cookies as the Myrtle Holt Bakery.

It is with sadness in our hearts that we bade a very fond farewell to Sharon on the 29th December 2009. We wish her well and much love on her journey beyond and hope to meet up with her again some day in the distant future. We love you Sharon, and will carry you forever in our hearts.



If you have stories and photos to share of The Fallen, please send them to your Chronicler or Viscountess Jennet MacLachlan of Loch Fyne.

History of the Pomander Ball

By Viscountess Jennet MacLachlan of Loch Fyne

Throughout historical times people have worn and loved perfumes. The importance of scent has never been denied by either men or women. Perfume has and always will be a powerful force of attraction to the opposite sex.

The pomander ball was created around 1200 AD as an attraction, a protection and as a tolerance method.

The pomander ball is a ball filled with perfumes of all types worn since the Middle Ages and was used to attract the opposite sex, it was used to tolerate the odor that was normal (since most people in the 1200's did not bathe very often) and was a form of protection against sickness and death. The practice of bathing was not common especially outside of France and it was not unusual for a person to bathe once a month at the most. Body odor was camouflaged by the practice of wearing a pomander ball around the neck or around the waist at the end of a chain. The ball would contain herbs, spices and fruits or flowers that contained natural perfumes to tickle the nostrils and waft away the body odors that passed by. Herbs such as rosemary and lavender amongst others are still considered highly aromatic today and are still used in potpourri mixes. Old English roses were extremely aromatic and unfortunately with the hybridization and grafting of many of the rose bushes that are grown today a lot of that perfume has been lost. The perfumes have been sacrificed to allow for a larger more showy flower. Dried oranges and other citrus fruits make wonderful aromatic mixes for potpourri mixes



The Origin of the Pomander Ball



The word "pomander" comes from the French expression "pomme d'ambre." This origin is believed to have been apple of gold. Since the apple is not believed to be the most aromatic of the fruits, it is somewhat surprising that this should have been the derivation of the word. Some believe that it actually means apple of ambergris. Ambergris being the perfume made from the blubber of a whale which is extremely aromatic and has been sought after for many centuries as the ultimate perfume. Hence apple of ambergris meaning the "apple" - most treasured, and "ambergris" - most perfumed. Thus the most treasured of perfumes...pomander. Considering the uses and need for the Pomander Ball, the all powerful aromatic ball had its work cut out for it.

The Purpose of the famed Pomander Ball

This little ball of perfume became most popular around the 1340's when the black death plague was killing thousands. Cleanliness in people as well as their surroundings was very much lacking. Streets and homes were strewn with filth, bodily fluids from both humans and animals as well as food. Filth was emptied out of windows into the streets below and no concern for cleanliness was even present. People believed that the cause of this disease lay in the resulting stench lingering about the city streets and peoples homes. It was firmly believed that the Pomander Ball could prevent black death because it repelled the smell which was believed to carry the disease. The perfume wafted up and protected the wearer from being able to inhale the smell that caused the disease. Of course today we know that that is ridiculous, however we still like the smells of the pomander ball or its newest incarnation of potpourri. It fills our sense of smell with aromas of food and nectar and soothes the mind. Although in Victorian times, the pomander ball was replaced with the gifting of an orange pierced with cloves and tied with a ribbon. It was believed by some that this was created for the lower classes who could not afford the expense of the silver pomander balls worn by the upper classes. Today people like to make these orange/clove treasures as display items or aromatic teasers around Christmas or Holiday time to heighten the sense of the season.



A Practical Approach to Wool Preparation

By HL Rowan Spiritwalker, O.W. // www.artisanhippychick.com

Many people are apprehensive about washing and processing raw wool/fleece. Observe a few simple rules and your results will be good (nearly) every time. Sheep are browsers and grazers; once they have filled their tummies, they like to lie down somewhere peaceful and digest their food.



They produce lanolin, which waterproofs their fleece and protects it and their skin from the elements. The combination of where they happened to lie down plus the lanolin, plus any hay or grain the shepherd/farmer tosses over the fence for them makes for what can appear to be more than some people want to take on. Wool fleece has a strong odor, from the lanolin, sweat and sometimes barnyard where the sheep may have been kept.

In our “modern middle ages” it’s a lot less labor intensive than it used to be. Especially if you have a top loading washer! Even if you don’t it is still relatively simple – sometimes time consuming but simple – to wash your own wool and make it ready for use.

Not every raw fleece out there is worth the trouble. There are some that are so matted and caked with barnyard mud and infiltrated with debris such as grain, alfalfa or burrs that it is really not worth the time, unless you REALLY want to. Some are diamonds in the rough and some just good for the practice, like the one below.



Unsalvageable; matted to the skin with barnyard mud and burrs.

The method I teach uses our “modern middle age conveniences” – something our ancestors would have appreciated. The point is to clean the wool/fleece so you card/comb it into something you can use.

Pre-wash Preparation: Lay the fleece cut side down on the floor on a sheet or whatever you have handy.



Pick the straw/woodchips/what have you off of it and discard. The neck area is usually loaded with hay/grain/chaff; the belly wool is shorter and usually loaded with dirt, both caked and loose; the rear of the sheep collects urine and fecal matter. Skirt and discard.

Don’t worry about dust and loose (uncaked) dirt that are “in” the fleece right now. You can pick it up and give it a few gentle shakes to get loose stuff out though.



A little vegetable matter is tolerable – it can be picked out.



Fecal matter is not!

Wool Preparation - continued

NEXT.... If you know how to turn your hot water heater up, do so. Anything over 140 degrees is good.



WASHING MACHINE METHOD: Set the machine on “hot wash”, and “large or extra-large load,” add two or three (depending on how much lanolin is in the fleece – more lanoline, a little more soap) scoops/measuring caps of laundry detergent. Let it fill and agitate for a minute or so to dissolve the soap. Any standard laundry soap (I use Arm and Hammer, for instance) works well.

Stop the washer. Make sure it can’t complete the cycle. If the fleece is very large (4 lbs or over), divide it in half and wash each half separately. Overloading makes it hard for the water and soap to thoroughly penetrate and clean. Very gently pull apart the wool in the middle of the fleece or the halves to make a good-sized hole.

Place the fleece in the washer, slipping the hole you made over the agitator, and gently push the fleece under the water. Doing it this way keeps the locks from separating overmuch. Close the lid on the washer, making sure you **DID** stop the cycle, and go away for 45 minutes or so.



(A note about agitation – DON’T let the washer agitate. Moisture plus heat and agitation = felt. So make sure the washer is turned off till you want to spin it out.)

When you come back, set the washer on “spin” and let it spin the dirty soapy water out. Depending on the amount of lanolin and the dirt that was in the fleece, you may have to repeat this step once or twice more. Gently remove the fleece from the washer, wipe out any dirt, and repeat the process. For REALLY gunky gummy fleeces I add a cup of ammonia in the wash water. (I can hear the gasps of horror but think – back in the day our ancestors used stale urine. Urine breaks down into uric acid and ammonia. Very effective way to clean fleece.)

RINSING: When the fleece feels clean, (sticky/tackiness gone) do a rinse soak with hot water and a half cup of vinegar. This removes the rest of the soap (and ammonia if you used it) and restores the pH balance of the wool. Again, **NO AGITATION.**



Soak and spin. You may have to do this a couple of times.

FOR THOSE WHO DON’T HAVE ACCESS TO A WASHER- You can wash wool in the sink or a bucket. Basically it’s a scaled-down process from the washer; hot water, and detergent – half a scoop would be plenty – in your sink, a pound of fleece. Gently push the fleece under the water and let it soak for about 45 minutes.



Pull the drain out and gently support the fleece with your hands till all the dirty water has run out. Repeat if necessary, then a final soak-rinse in hot water with a little vinegar.

Wool Preparation - continued

DRYING: In the summer months I put the fleece out in a big laundry basket on my porch or lawn to dry; in the winter months I spread it out on a sheet on my living room floor. Anywhere is good as long as it gets some air. Turn it as necessary to ensure it dries.



For fleeces that have more than their share of vegetable matter in them, even after washing, I take the **dried** fleece down to my dryer, set it to “**no heat,**” put the fleece in, set it for 30 to 60 minutes and turn it on. **Check every 10-15 minutes to empty the lint filter.** Tumbling it in the dryer will remove a GREAT deal of the grass, chaff, dust, etc. You can do this a couple of times to aid in getting excess vegetable matter out.

Further preparation for use: If you are combing or carding yourself, and have the advantage of owning a wool picker, this would be the time to use it. (Wool pickers “pick” the fleece apart, making it easier to comb or card.)



Wool Picker

If you don't have a wool picker, you can pull the locks apart by hand. This also helps any remaining vegetable matter/dust in the wool to fall out. You can choose to card or comb it yourself, or have it sent to a processor to be made into roving or batts. (**Why wash it beforehand?** Because the processors charge for **incoming**, unprocessed weight, not outgoing, finished weight.)



Wool on Combs



Wool on Carders



Wool Roving from Processor

That is the basics of “modern middle ages” wool preparation. Confidence comes with practice and experimentation. It is extremely satisfying to work with wool you have prepared yourself. Have fun with it!

(Thanks to Monique de Toulon for her suggestion to include this class handout - And thanks to HL Rowan Spritwalker for giving us permission to include it here.)

Recipes from the Hearth: Viking Apple Bacon

Suggested by Lord Bjolan Bjornson

400 g (1 lb) bacon, fresh or cured
 1 tbsp lard or butter, if needed
 2 onions, sliced
 2-3 apples, cored and sliced
 Pepper
 A few whole cloves

Cut the bacon into slices and fry them in a large frying pan at medium heat. Turn them over a couple of times and fry until crisp. Remove from pan, add lard or butter if needed and fry onion rings and apple slices with the spices at low heat until they are soft and beginning to color. Return the bacon to the pan, stir and let warm through. Serve with freshly baked bread.

Meeting Highlights

Myrtle Holt's Incipient Barony status was announced at Egil's. Bring Baronial regalia, award, and other ideas to the July business meeting!

Myrtle Holt won bids for the Captain of Eagles archery championship and the Summits Bard championship to be held at ARC!

Vicountess Jennet MacLachlan of Loch Fyne will be awarded the Order of the Pelican at An Tir West War. She will be placed on Vigil on Friday with her elevation on Saturday. Huzzah!



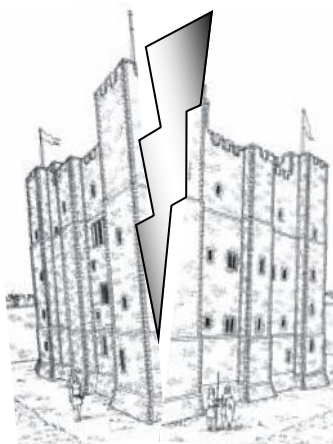
Dayshade Challenge—Battle of the Biancos

The Gull-Wing Party

Vicountess Jennet MacLachlan of Loch Fyne

Her Excellency proposes to raise funds to replace the current pavilion with a completely new gull-wing structure utilizing wooden support posts.

Progress to date:
\$92.87



The It's-Not-Dead-Yet Party

His Lordship David de Rosier-Blanc

His Lordship, the Minister of Arts & Sciences, proposes to replace the support posts of the current pavilion, keep it, and recondition it.

Progress to date:
\$74.34

For to Serve a Lord or How to Make a Feast Happen (Part 3)

By *HL Felicia of the True Layne*

It is the wonderful part-time volunteers that at times can make or break a feast! These folks are often young and when they have nothing else to do or they are genuinely interested in food wander into the kitchen asking, “Do you need some help?” If you are head-chef and must at that moment turn them away because nothing needs done just now, give them a time to return when you will need their help! Sometimes I **DELIBERATELY** leave some prep-work to do on site just to meet these folk because it is from these folk that future chefs (feast stewards) come. The treatment they receive from you and the “staff” will determine if they will wish to continue helping or disappear into the woodwork. That treatment will eventually cause them to step up to the stove in their own right or run away screaming from the very thought of it. Don’t discourage them by yelling at them for trifling errors that in the end cause no real damage to the feast. Besides they only do what you told them to do and sometimes you don’t always give complete directions, you just think you did. Give them the benefit of doubt and **THANK THEM!** Try not to dump your over-heated fear of failure upon them. Volunteering should be a happy experience worth repeating; not a gloomy fear-and-tear filled teeth-gritting exercise in skin thickening!

At this point in this article we shall segue to the dining room to a person that is more important than the actual menu. He is more important and integral to proper service than is the dishwasher. He apparently, for the most part, does not exist in his entirety in this kingdom and he is someone that I, as a chef, sorely miss! Is it a prince or princess or a peer? Could it be a baron or a duke or duchess? **NO,** (Although sometimes he or she can hold those titles!) it is a properly trained and totally reliable and knowledgeable **HALL STEWARD!**

Now it could be debated all day as to what the duties of a hall steward are now and what they were in medieval times, but there can be no doubt or argument that it is a very important, difficult and useful position.

Why the chef needs a good hall steward: The hall steward is the official buffer between the volunteer servers and the chef. Without a good hall steward the feast descends into near chaos because thirty volunteer servers are tearing about the kitchen asking a myriad of questions of the harried chef as he is trying to prepare the second course and is ladling out the first course! Or worse, there are no volunteers to serve and the chef must leave the kitchen in search of the help that will be needed just when he should be cooking his fool head off! The hall steward is the liaison officer from the kitchen to the royalty and the royal servers. He is the one to hand out the feast menu to the herald or to announce the courses if necessary. He is the one who instructs the servers, the drink and bread runners and answers the questions of the autocrat (event steward- sigh) about the service to soon proceed. He is the one who brings his questions to the head-chef early on and then disseminates the answers to the serving help! He knows where the light-switches in the dining area are, where the mop bucket is, and is the **ONLY** person to bother the cooks as they are the cooking, garnishing, portioning, or plating during the feast proper (as it is going out the door)! This leaves the chef to cook, not run from point to point and from person to person to person until he is exhausted and going mad!



Last Call

Archery Practices are held every 2nd and 4th Sunday at Fenwald Farm in Shady Cove

Next Business Meeting

July 12, 11am Riverside Park



Officer Excerpts

Chatelaine: This position is still open/accepting applications

Marshall: Practices are continuing throughout the tourney season. Check online for times & locations.

MoAS: Tuesday A&S Evenings at Vesta's//Stained Glass Project Ongoing

Chronicler: Submissions still needed.

More detailed Officer Reports are posted in the Meeting Minutes.



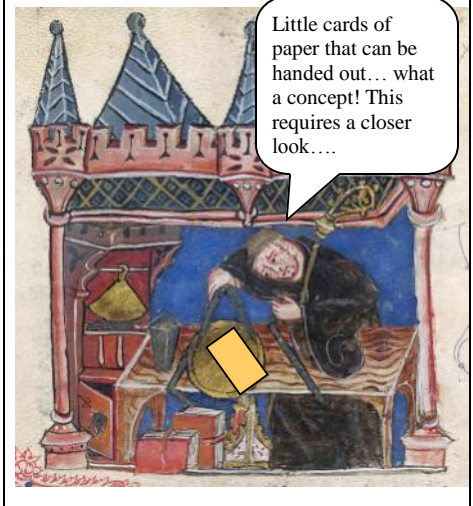
Looking Forward

ARC October 2015
Autocrat: Lady Andreana Sionnach (Andrea Fox)
Feast Team: Needed!

Investiture December 11-12, 2015
Autocrat Team: Megan & Janet
Feast Team: Monique and Aelfrich,
Feast Assistant: Edward Target-Cleaver

Hogmanay January 2016
Autocrat: Brian
Highland Games Steward: Bowen Doyle
Feastocrat: Loree

**Lots of Opportunities
coming up to pass out
Myrtle Holt business cards!**



Calendar

JUNE

- 7 Myrtle Holt Business Meeting, Riverside Park
19-21 [Summits Summer Investiture](#) , Corvaria

JULY

- 01-05 [An Tir West War](#) , Gold Beach, OR
17-19 [July Coronation](#) , Sedro-Woolley, WA
31- 8/2 [Briaroak Bash](#) , Winston, OR

AUGUST

- 14-16 [Tain Bo](#), Glyn Dwfn
20 SCA Demo at Josephine County Fairgrounds, 6:30pm
20-23 [Sport of Kings](#), Ranier, OR

Find More Events:

<http://antir.sca.org/Upcoming/index.php>

Check <http://www.myrtleholt.antir.sca.org/> for Fighter Practice times and locations.



Shire Officers



SENECHAL
Lady Brynhildr Smidsdottir
(Megan Blattel)



ARTS & SCIENCES
HL David de Rosier-Blanc
(David Bianco)



GOLD KEY
Constance Campbell
(Christina Hager)



CHIURGEON
Pending



SCRIBE
HL Keara Ryllyn Buchanan
(Loree Day)



HERALD
Lord Bjolan Bjornson
(Rev. James A. Otto Sr.)



HEAVY MARSHAL
Bowen Doyle
(Albert Wessels)



WEBMINISTER
Lord Thorlof Anarson
(Josh Plater)



EXCCEQUER
HL Caterine Mitchell
(Kattie Cole)



CHRONICLER
(Sarah Givens)



DEPUTY GOLD KEY
Alina MacMurrich
(Amanda C. Cowin)



DEPUTY CHIRURGEON



CHATELAINE
Accepting Applications



HERALD IN TRAINING
Eric Liefson
(Glenn Allen)



TARGET ARCHERY MARSHAL
Lord Uilliam (Liam) Mag Duibhfhinn
(Morris Givens)



EQUESTRIAN MARSHAL
HL Robert Buffle
(Robert Chism)

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