



The Connecticut Thymes

Winter 2006 – Spring 2007

www.ctherb.org

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CHAI Calendar

See further details in the body of the Newsletter.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27

First Quarterly Meeting of 2007. All are welcome to attend. We shall be meeting at 11 am at the Ninety Nine Restaurant in Torrington (Dutch Treat). For directions go to <http://the99.know-where.com/the99/>.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 28

Brunch 11AM at East Meets West Restaurant, 288 Mechanic St., Danielson (860) 779-1122. Brunch will be Dutch. We all then proceed .2 of a mile to Logee's Greenhouse and we shall tour the 7 greenhouses. For directions go to: <http://www.logees.com/directions.asp>. For information contact Sue Coombs 860 546-2076 or herbalheaven@sbcglobal.net. It would be good to RSVP just so I have a head count for brunch, but is not mandatory. Come out of hibernation for a day in the tropical greenhouses with passionflowers in full bloom and orange trees bearing fruit.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18

Tower Hill Botanical Gardens Tour, Boylston, MA. <http://www.towerhillbg.org/> \$8 for adults, \$5 for kids and seniors. We shall meet at 11AM. That weekend they are featuring their Annual Camellia Exhibition. We shall tour the gardens and have lunch at the Twigs Café at the gardens. The lunch will be Dutch. Carpooling is suggested. For information or carpool coordinating contact Sue Coombs (860) 546-2076 or herbalheaven@sbcglobal.net.

THURSDAY, MARCH 15

Deadline for submissions for next issue of *The Connecticut Thymes*. cadpine@yahoo.com

FRIDAY, JUNE 1 / SATURDAY, JUNE 2

HerbFest at Topmost Herb Farm, Coventry, CT. VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! alharford@aol.com

SUNDAY, JULY 22

Elizabeth Park Potluck Picnic and tour. 12- 3PM. We shall enjoy a potluck picnic lunch together, and then go tour the rose garden, annuals garden, herb garden, and rock garden. For directions go to <http://www.elizabethpark.org/directions.htm>.



Message from CHAI Board of Directors

First and foremost, we want to thank Pam Quayle for all her years of service as chair of HerbFest committee. Pam has chaired HerbFest committee for a number of years, and has now stepped down to focus on other endeavors. The work that goes into such an event is a true labor of love. Pam, thank you for your years of service and generosity. Pat Lavery shall be taking over Pam's position. Just in case you all missed it in the last newsletter, HerbFest committee is still in need of 2-3 more people to help out. Please contact Pat if you are interested.

I also would like to welcome Deb Pouech. Deb is now CHAI's webmistress. She took over duties in December 2006. Deb has been a long-time member of CHAI through the years. Thank you, CJ, for all your help in getting the web site up and our newsletters web based for a more efficient and cost effective CHAI.

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Message from the Board

Continued from Page 1

Reflecting on 2006, it certainly has been an interesting year. Retreat was a memorable Spring outing. HerbFest, despite going on in a monsoon, still proved to get people out and making the best of the day. Our major speaker for the year, Jodi Noé, was attended by a fair number of people. Based on feedback from those who attended, it was a productive event. We did have minor fund losses at each of these events; I feel that this is more an example of the present economy and the weird forces of nature in the present year than lack of interest. With gas prices at more than \$3 a gallon this Summer, and people being busier than ever, it made for an interesting year.

Looking forward to this coming year (2007), the Board has decided to focus on keeping CHAI moving forward through somewhat leaner times. We wish to foster creative ways to continue CHAI's growth and we are striving to keep a balance of social-, educational-, and practitioner-gearred events.

- The first Board quarterly meeting will be on Saturday, January 27th at 11AM. All are welcome to attend. We shall be meeting at the Ninety Nine Restaurant in Torrington. At that date, we shall set the next two quarterly meeting times. The next annual meeting will be Thursday, November 8 at the Newington Senior Center at 7PM. This will be a potluck meeting, where all members are encouraged to attend and give their input for the following year's goals, efforts, and events.
- To start the year off, there will be a brunch (Dutch treat) and garden walk through Logee's greenhouses on January 28. All of you hibernating folks who are not fond of the cold, come and enjoy strolling through the seven enchanted greenhouses. We chose this for January because we wanted everyone to come and see all those beautiful passionflower plants in full bloom during the dead of Winter and bring some warmth and joy to your souls.



Lemon Tree
from
Logee's Greenhouse

- On February 18, we are hosting a trip to Tower Hill Botanical Gardens in Boyleston, MA. This is the time when they have the Camillia exhibit, and 9 wonderful greenhouses to walk through. The cost to get into the gardens is \$8 for adults, \$5 for seniors and children. Lunch will be Dutch treat at the restaurant nearby. This trip is about 1½ hours from the southernmost points in CT, so carpooling is the best option. Go to the calendar of events for more details and contact information.
- There was interest at the annual meeting for having weeknight social gatherings amongst the weekend events for those who work on Saturdays in shops and doing weekend consultations etc. In an effort to accommodate this, CHAI is calling on its members. Is there anyone willing to host a weeknight social outing in the name of CHAI at their home or in their shop, gardens etc.? We are in need of hosts for the months of March, May, and August. People might recall Paulla's Friday evenings in the gardens from the last two years as an example. Please contact Shirley Hales (shirleyhales@sbcglobal.net) if you are willing to do such an outing.
- June 3 is our beloved HerbFest, which this year will prove to be another wonderful, event filled day.
- July 22, we are hosting a potluck luncheon trip to Elizabeth Park where we shall meet, enjoy a wonderful picnic lunch, and then tour the rose and herb gardens.
- In October, Lupo shall be hosting a small lecture on women's issues.
- The months in between are still a work-in-progress. If anyone has any suggestions or ideas, feel free to contact Shirley as coordinator.

It is our hope that CHAI will continue to grow and thrive in the coming year. By doing our best to accommodate all of our members' interests, we hope that you all further nurture one another. This nurturing of each other and CHAI in turn helps to nurture oneself. CHAI would be nothing without its members, and we need for our members to want to nurture CHAI so that it can continue to thrive. Just as we give to the plants by tending them, the plants in turn give us life, sustenance, and health. It really is full circle. Here's hoping that we all keep CHAI in our minds and hearts, as our passion for herbs is something we all have in common.

Sue Coombs
President, CHAI Board of Directors

Mark where mistletoe grows, for Christmas decorations, but on no account bring it into the house until Christmas Eve. Charles Kightly, *The Perpetual Almanac of Folklore*.



Photo:
www.sbs.utexas.edu/mbierner/bio406d/images/pics/vis/phoradendron_tomentosum.htm

The mistletoe that grows on our North American continent (*Phoradendron tomentosum*) does not belong to the same genus as the European mistletoe (*Viscum album*), but the legends and lore of the European plant long ago made their way to America and attached themselves firmly to American mistletoe. In fact, the mystery and magic of this evergreen, tree-growing herb is rooted in many different cultures. Look throughout this issue for some of the traditions ... *All About Thyme*:
www.aboutthyme.com/dayletters/061218.html



Turkey Tails!!!

By
 Kat Conte (inspired by TL)
 12/14/06

Since returning from a class on medicinal mushrooms at Sage Mountain, VT, I have been searching for Turkey Tails in my neighborhood woods. Having learned they grow on dead wood and often on logs lying on the ground, I combed the woods looking down or at eye level. I decided they don't grow around here and let it go.

Today an old, dead 50 foot maple tree was taken down in my front yard. I went out to watch it being cut up and to my delight the top part of the tree was full of **Turkey Tails!!**

So, the moral to the story...sometimes you just need to look **UP**

Turkey Tails: *Trametes vesicolor*.

Description and Habitat: Multicolored cap resembles turkey tails... Brown, buff and gray fan-shaped bands, papery thin with white to buff undersides that do not darken when scratched. (Dark brown underside indicates "false turkey tail" and is not of medicinal value) Grows on deadwood, often on branches or logs lying on the ground. Excellent for wild crafting because they are so abundant. Grows in one season, very prolific, can be picked at any stage of growth.

Preparation: Highly water soluble, tea preps are best or used in conjunction with extract.

Actions: Powerful immune enhancer, anti-tumor, anti-viral, anti-bacterial, anti-oxidant. This polypore is the source of PSK, commercially known as "Krestin", responsible for several millions of dollars worth of sales as an anti-cancer drug in Asia. Also for general immune weakness, pulmonary disorders, liver and kidney tonic. It is one of the most powerful polypore for the immune system.



Photo from <http://maryosborn.blogspot.com>



- ❁ Norwegian peasants hung mistletoe from the rafters of their homes to protect against lightning.
- ❁ In Wales, mistletoe gathered on Midsummer Eve was placed under the pillow at Yule-tide to induce prophetic dreams.
- ❁ In northern Europe, mistletoe was thought to act as a master key that would open any lock.
- ❁ Swedish farmers hung mistletoe in the horse's stall and the cow's crib, to protect against evil trolls. They also used the wood to make divining rods.



Words from the Webmistress



Warm Winter Greetings,

Word through the herbal grapevine was that CJ's life had become extra busy, and that she wished to pass along the responsibility of the CHAI website to another.

Although based mostly in Florida these days, my heart and soul are still deeply rooted in Connecticut, and as a member of CHA (CHAI) from the beginning, I offered to help. Herbs 'n Honey has built and maintains over 25 webpages for the herbal community. We pride ourselves in working to promote herbalism on the web.

Webpages must be kept fresh and interesting to entice visitors to browse. We should give the website a bit more pizzazz...make it stand out as a site to visit for local herbal information and happenings. In order to do this, member input is necessary. You can always contact me at the e-mail listed below with your suggestions, comments, and ideas.

- ☒ send in info on workshops, events, or tours you are hosting
- ☒ send in your info and link info to your webpage
- ☒ send in your info even if you have no webpage
- ☒ send in pictures of your gardens, your favorite plants

Thank you, CJ, for putting CHAI out onto the web. I will do my best to move forward with the work you started.

Deb Pouech
deb@herbsnhoney.com
www.herbsnhoney.com



Tower Hill Botanical Gardens
February 18, 2007



The Systematic Garden

The Systematic Garden is a one-of-a-kind educational experience where you will find plants arranged "systematically", according to our current scientific understanding of their evolutionary relationships. Designed in an Italianate style, this garden presents twenty-six distinct plant families, making it a virtual encyclopedia of the Plant Kingdom



CHAI Annual Meeting Thursday, November 9, 2006

For a look at the detailed minutes of the annual meeting, feel free to access them under the same password as the newsletters for the year. The meeting started with a potluck dinner. The minutes of the previous meeting were skimmed for accuracy and there were no objections.

The treasurer then went over the basic budget for the previous year and the coming year. While she didn't have all of the numbers present at the meeting, they were emailed to all interested parties a few days later. They are attached to the full minutes for member review. There was an in depth discussion regarding the 2006 year events budget, and the term of 'self-sustaining' used to describe budget allocation. There was not a consensus at the meeting on this subject. Following the meeting, the Board agreed that going forward, this will not be the philosophy adopted in terms of budget overages. All overages have been paid for 2006. Going forward, overages shall be paid immediately. But, it must be kept in mind that CHAI does not have a line of credit and has no other place from which to draw funds.

HerbFest has been given 100% of CHAI funds for the year, which is about 1/2 of the proposed budget for 2007. Neither retreat nor speakers committees submitted budgets for review, so there will be no retreat or major speaker for 2007. David Winston is booked for 2007, but we may still have him as a speaker for 2008. There was discussion about co-sponsor the major speakers with another group.

Membership is at around 60 members. Membership reviewed the renewal reminders that have been sent out. The Directory is now up for all members to access. For further outreach, there was discussion about having a membership booth at the Master Gardener Conference in March and get advertisements into *The Door Opener*, *Herb Quarterly*, and *Herb Companion*. The e-forum was discussed. Presently there are just over 100 members. The e-forum opening page has been updated with a mission statement, rules, and we now have two moderators.

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HerbFest Committee

- The Committee still needs 2-3 people to help with planning. If you are interested, please contact Pat Lavery: galavery@snet.net or 860-667-2542.
- In addition, Volunteers are needed to help set up for HerbFest on Friday, June 1, as well as for the admissions, food booth, parking, and cleaning up on Saturday, June 2. If you are interested, please contact Ann Harford: alHarford@aol.com or 860-872-0406

Membership Committee

- We are hoping to spread the word about CHAI by having information tables at various events during the coming year. If you are interested in sitting in two hour shifts for various events (the only one that is completely pinned down right now is the Master Gardeners Conference on March 17) please contact Gale Pollen, cadpine@yahoo.com or 203-288-7697.



The Herb Garden: Elizabeth Park. Pot luck lunch and tour of gardens on July 22, 2007.

Annual Meeting, continued

Regarding Board positions, President remains the same, and Lupo Connell replaces Michele Maclure as Secretary. HerbFest Committee is still in need of 2-3 people to fill vacancies. No other requests were made from other committees.

The events for 2007 were discussed. There was some discussion about getting Steven Sinatra as a future speaker. There was also some discussion on dressing up the web site a bit more, and getting the old newsletter archived on the web site.

- ❁ In the South of France, mistletoe was thought to be an antidote to all poisons (NEVER eat the berries!)
- ❁ Everywhere, people enjoy kissing under the mistletoe, but watch out – it's also been considered a fertility plant!
- ❁ European mistletoe (*Viscum album*) has been used for millennia for a variety of illnesses, including epilepsy, heart disease, rheumatism, anxiety exhaustion, asthma, diarrhea, and hypertension. Now, scientists are exploring it as an immune-system stimulant.



Poetry Corner



A Tolkien/*Lord of the Rings* inspired poem

AWAKENING

Awake.
Today I am awake,
As are we all.
Forever.
It seems to be forever
That we've walked this land,
But I can only remember today.
Green.
Is that a color, or a scent?
Wet.
Is that a scent or a sensation?
Light.
Those lights above.
Are they lights in the dark?
Or is the dark covering the lights?
Smells.
Smells of green and living things.
Smells of others of my kind.
Sounds.
Sounds of ... what?
Wind in trees?
My kind talking? Singing?
Awake.
Awake to this land.
Awake to this life.
And I am glad to be
Awake!

Gale Pollen

For Love of Herbs

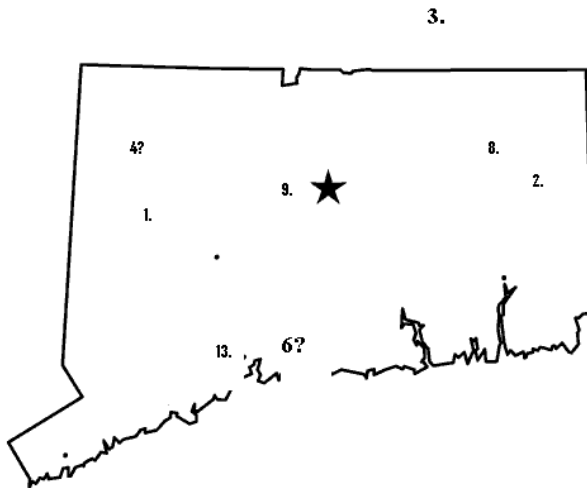


**Connecticut Herb
Association Inc. (CHAI)**
www.ctherb.org

Be on the lookout for the CHAI tee-shirts! If all goes well, tee-shirts should be available for sale by the end of February. Keep an eye on your e-mail for more details!

CHAI Events locations

1. Saturday January 27, 2007: CHAI quarterly Board meeting
2. Sunday January 28, 2007: Logee's Greenhouse
3. Sunday February 18, 2007: Tower Hill Botanical Gardens Tour
4. March; details to follow
5. April: details to follow
6. April/ May: CHAI quarterly meeting, details to follow
7. May: details to follow
8. Saturday June 2, 2007: HerbFest
9. Sunday July 22, 2007: Elizabeth Park
10. July/August: CHAI quarterly meeting: Details to follow.
11. August: details to follow
12. September: details to follow
13. October: Lupo Connell shall be hosting a talk on women's issues. New Milford, CT.
14. Thursday November 8, 2007: CHAI annual meeting/Potluck dinner.



One of My Favorite Things by Pam Quayle



Photo from
www.laspilitas.com/plants/29.htm

For the last year I've been using a nasal spray from a recipe Paul Bergner published a couple years ago in an issue of *MEDICAL HERBALISM*. He has found in his clinic that it almost always clears, or 90% clears, chronic sinusitis in 3-4 days. It may be necessary to remove dairy products from the diet to avoid reoccurrence. Although sinusitis is usually treated allopathically

with antibiotics, the symptoms often quickly return. Relatively recent research has shown that most sinus infections are fungal, or partially fungal, with allergies to the fungus aggravating the condition. This formula, adapted from an Eclectic recipe, is antifungal.

Reading the article made me think about how irritated my sinuses become when gardening in moldy conditions, particularly in the autumn when disturbing moldy leaves. Allergy symptoms follow and dry air associated with turning heat on in the house adds to the problem. Now this formula clears it in a day. Just had to share it with you all!

A neti pot could be used, but I find a 2 oz nasal saline spray bottle purchased at a pharmacy is an easy method to blend and apply the formula. Empty the saline and add a dram (about a teaspoon) of glycerin to the bottle. Then add 15 drops *Hydrastis* (Goldenseal) tincture and 15 drops *Anemopsis* (Yerba Mansa) tincture. You can substitute Myrrh for the Yerba Mansa if necessary, although I haven't tried that. Fill the rest of the bottle with water and shake. Apparently the glycerin fills the roll of the saline that is usually found in nasal spray formulas and it's milder on the sinuses to use plain water with it.

DO NOT change the amounts of the formula. The glycerin protects the mucus membranes from the alcohol in the tinctures, but will burn them if more is used. It's also important to rinse out the bottle every two days and make a new batch. It is not preserved and WILL spoil, creating nasty black stuff that clings to the bottle. I wouldn't reuse a bottle if this happens.

Since I'm exposed to the mold problem many times over the gardening season I've come up with this simple way to quickly prepare the formula. I keep a 2-oz bottle of glycerin and a 1-oz bottle each of *Hydrastis* and *Anemopsis*, all with droppers, with the clean nasal spray bottles. Find the level on the 2 oz dropper that equals a dram of glycerin, squirt that into the bottle and it's easy to count out the drops of tincture. In a couple minutes it's ready to use.

Anemopsis californica is a wetland plant from the southwest US. You can find information on its other uses in Michael Moore's writings. If it is hard to find here, I have a small amount of tincture available. ❀



Cooking with ...



... The Internet.

No one sent in recipes for this issue so, given the holidays that are coming up, I thought I'd do a bit of research. I've included some international recipes to help us celebrate the New Year, as well as Imbolc, Candlemass, and Valentine's Day. I haven't tried these recipes myself, but they look interesting ... Gale

December 31, 2006 - January 1, 2007

... www.recipes4us.co.uk

Dutch: "Gullukkg Niuw Jaar"

Oliebollen are donuts traditionally eaten at New Year in Holland. Because the Dutch believe you should eat the old year out and the new year in, a family New Year's Eve is often spent drinking mulled wine and nibbling on these delicious donuts whilst playing games.

Oliebollen Dutch 35 minutes plus standing -
Makes approx 18

Ingredients

- ✦ 50g/2oz Raisins
- ✦ 120ml/4fl.oz. Red Wine
- ✦ 480ml/16fl.oz. Milk
- ✦ 2 tbsp Granulated Sugar
- ✦ 1/2 teasp Salt
- ✦ 2 tbsp Butter
- ✦ 60ml/2fl.oz. Warm Water
- ✦ 1 small package Cake Yeast
- ✦ 1 Egg
- ✦ 1 teasp Lemon Juice
- ✦ 350g/12oz Plain Flour
- ✦ Oil for deep frying
- ✦ Icing sugar for dusting

Instructions

1. Soak raisins in the wine for 15 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, place the milk in a large saucepan and bring to boiling point. Remove from the heat, stir in sugar, salt and butter and allow to cool.
3. In a large bowl, add the yeast to the warm water and stir until the yeast dissolves.

4. Stir in the milk mixture, egg, 1/2 of the flour, lemon juice, and drained raisins and beat until smooth.
5. Stir in the remaining flour, cover and leave for 1 hour or until double in size.
6. Heat oil to 180C/350F. Beat the batter down.
7. Deep fry spoonfuls of dough until golden brown on all sides. Drain on kitchen paper then dust with icing sugar.

January 1, 2007

Italian: "Buon Capodanno"

Lentils are traditionally eaten on New Year's Day in Italy. Their round shape, being reminiscent of coins, is a symbol of good luck and prosperity in the new year.

Lenticchie Stufate di Capodanno Italian 45
minutes plus soaking – Serves 6

Ingredients

- ✦ 225g/8oz Lentils
- ✦ 2 Sprigs Rosemary
- ✦ 2 Garlic Cloves, 1 crushed, 1 whole
- ✦ 90ml/3fl.oz. Olive Oil
- ✦ 240ml/8fl.oz. Fresh Vegetable Stock (approx)
- ✦ salt and pepper
- ✦ 1 tbsp Tomato Paste

Instructions

1. Place the lentils in a large bowl, cover with water and leave to soak for 1 hour.
2. After soaking, drain the lentils and place in large saucepan. Cover with water, then add 1 sprig of rosemary together with 1 clove of garlic. Bring to a boil then reduce the heat and simmer for 15 minutes.
3. Drain the lentils and discard the rosemary and garlic clove. Set aside.
4. Heat the olive oil in a large saucepan, add the remaining rosemary and crushed garlic stir for 1 minute.
5. Add the lentils, stock, salt, pepper, and tomato paste, stir well and cook over a medium heat for 20 minutes until the lentils are tender and most of the liquid has been absorbed. Serve hot.

Cooking with ... continued

January 1, 2007, continued

Scottish Gaelic: "bliadhna mhath ur"

For the first half of the twentieth century, most of the protestant Scots worked over Christmas (believing Christmas to be a popish celebration) so New Year was the first opportunity for them to party. Celebrate Hogmanay the Scottish way with this traditional warming drink.

Het Pint - Scottish 15mins – Serves 8

Ingredients

- ✦ 2.4L/80fl.oz. Mild Ale
- ✦ 1 teasp Grated Nutmeg;
- ✦ 100g/4oz Sugar
- ✦ 3 Eggs, beaten
- ✦ 120ml/4fl.oz. Whisky

Instructions

1. Place the ale in a large saucepan add the nutmeg and bring to simmering point.
2. Add the sugar and stir until it dissolves.
3. Gradually add the well beaten eggs, stirring constantly so that it doesn't curdle.
4. Add the Whisky and heat, stirring. **Do not boil.** Serve in heated tankards.

February 1 – Imbolc / February 2 – Candlemass /
February 14 – Feast of Brigid / Valentine's Day

Candlemas brings in Spring and is between the Winter and Spring Equinoxes. It is one of the cross quarter days of the wheel of the year. Feb 1st is sacred to Saint Brigid or Bride *the Bright One* of the Sun. She is the patron saint of nuns who call themselves the Brides of Christ. Women dress as Brides in marriage ceremonies. Saint of smiths, sacred arts, and growing things. The *Day of Old Candlemass* is February 14th On her feast day, Bride's statue is washed in the sea (purification) and then carried in a cart through the fields surrounded by candles. Fires are blessed. The augury of Brigid is called *frith*.

(www.tartanplace.com/valentine/candlemass/candlemass.html)

February 1, 2007 – Imbolc

...www.unc.edu/~reddeer/recipe/rec_imbolc.html

BAKED CUSTARD WITH GINGER

Ingredients

- ✦ 3 Tablespoons Brown Sugar
- ✦ 3/4 teaspoon Finely Grated Fresh Ginger
- ✦ 3 large Eggs, lightly beaten
- ✦ 2 1/2 cups Milk
- ✦ 1/3 cup Granulated Sugar
- ✦ 1 teaspoon Vanilla Extract
- ✦ 1/4 teaspoon Cinnamon
- ✦ 1/4 teaspoon Salt
- ✦ 1/4 teaspoon Nutmeg

Instructions

1. Mix brown sugar with ginger and divide evenly onto bottoms of 6 buttered individual custard cups or ramekins. In medium mixing bowl, blend eggs with milk, sugar, vanilla and seasonings. Pour evenly into prepared custard cups. Place cups in a large pan, then fill with hot water to come halfway up sides of cups (a hot water bath or bain-marie). Bake at 350 F. oven for 35 to 40 minutes, or until knife inserted near edge comes out clean. Remove cups from bain-marie. Run knife around edges to loosen. Place serving plate over top of cup and carefully invert custard onto plate. Serve warm or cover, chill and serve cold.

February 2, 2007 - Candlemass

... www.wicca.com/celtic/akasha/imbolcrecip.htm

Blessed Bride's Cake

Ingredients

- ✦ 1 cup sugar
- ✦ 1 cup walnut meats, chopped
- ✦ 1 cup vegetable oil
- ✦ 1 cup golden raisins
- ✦ 1 cup flour
- ✦ 4 eggs
- ✦ 1 tsp. baking powder

Instructions

Mix all the ingredients together until they are wet. Do not over mix. Pour into a greased and floured 9"x9"x2" square baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 20-30 minutes, or until knife inserted in middle of cake comes out clean. Allow to cool before serving.

Cooking with ... continued

February 14 – Old Candlemass / St. Brigid's Feast / Valentine's Day

...www.tartanplace.com/valentine/candlemass/candlemass.html

Candied Rose Petals

Ingredients

- ⊕ 1 cup rose petals
- ⊕ 1 cup sugar
- ⊕ 3/4 cup water
- ⊕ confectioners' sugar

Instructions

1. Wash rose petals gently and dry on paper towels.
2. Trim away the ends, because they are bitter.
3. Combine sugar and water in a saucepan and boil until it is 234 degrees fahrenheit on a candy thermometer.
4. Pour syrup into a bowl on a bed of cracked ice.
5. When syrup begins to crystalize, hold petals with tweezers and dip.
6. Dry petals on waxed paper and dust with confectioner' sugar.

Joane Asala, *Celtic Folklore Cooking*, page 320, © 1998, ISBN: 1567180442

What is Hogmanay?

(see Het Pint, under January 1, 2007)

Hogmanay is celebrated on New Year's Eve, every year, usually in a most exuberant fashion in Scotland, as hundreds of thousands of revelers take to the streets to see in the New Year. In the cities of Glasgow and Edinburgh it has become a huge ticketed festival. Celebrations start in the early evening and reach a crescendo by midnight. Minutes before the start of the New Year, a lone piper plays, then the bells of Big Ben chime at the turn of midnight, lots of kissing, and everyone sings *Auld Lang Syne*. And then there is more kissing. Elsewhere in Scotland, particularly in more remote parts, customary first footing and Scottish dances, or ceilidhs (pronounced "kayli"), take place. For centuries, fire ceremonies -- torch light processions, fireball swinging and lighting of New Year fires -- played an important part in the Hogmanay celebrations. And they still do.

Where did the word Hogmanay come from

Nobody knows for sure where the word "Hogmanay" came from. Opinions differ as to whether it originated from the Gaelic *oge maidne* ("New Morning"), Anglo-Saxon *Haleg Monath* ("Holy Month"), or Norman French word *hoguinané*, which was derived from the Old French *anguillanneuf* ("gift at New Year"). It's also been suggested that it came from the French *au gui mener* ("lead to the mistletoe") or a Flemish combo *hoog* ("high" or "great"), *min* ("love" or "affection") and *dag* ("day"). Take your pick.

What are the origins of Hogmanay?

Hogmanay's roots reach back to the pagan practice of sun and fire worship in the deep mid-Winter. This evolved into the ancient Saturnalia, a great Roman Winter festival, where people celebrated completely free of restraint and inhibition. The Vikings celebrated Yule, which became the twelve days of Christmas, or the "Daft Days" as they became known in Scotland. The winter festival went underground with the Reformation and ensuing years, but re-emerged at the end of the 17th Century. Since then the customs have continued to evolve to the modern day.

What is the symbolism of fire at Hogmanay?

The flame and fire at Hogmanay symbolizes many things. The bringing of the light of knowledge from one year to the next, lighting the way into the next uncharted century, putting behind you the darkness past, but carrying forward its sacred flame of hope and enlightenment to a better parish, and in this day, world.

What is First Footing?

Traditionally, it has been held that your new year will be a prosperous one if, at the strike of midnight, a "tall, dark stranger" appears at your door with a lump of coal for the fire, or a cake or coin. In exchange, you offered him food, wine or a wee dram of whisky, or the traditional Het Pint, which is a combination of ale, nutmeg and whisky. It's been suggested that the fear associated with blond strangers arose from the memory of blond-haired Viking's raping and pillaging Scotland circa 4th to 12th centuries. What's more likely to happen these days is that groups of friends or family get together and do a tour of each others' houses. Each year, a household takes it in turn to provide a meal for the group. In many parts of Scotland gifts or "Hogmananys" are exchanged after the turn of midnight.

<http://www.hogmanay.net/history/faq>



Upcoming Classes



CT NOFA

Getting Started in Organic Farming,

January 13, 8:30 am – 4 pm. Jones Auditorium, CT Agricultural Experiment Station, New Haven.

Paul Bucciaglia from Fort Hill Farm, New Milford, and other farmers. Fee of \$25 for NOFA members of \$35 for non members; includes lunch

NOFA Accreditation course in Organic Land Care, New Haven.

January 31, February 1, 2, 5, 6. See www.organiclandcare.net for more information.

Second Annual Community Farming Conference,

Mercy Center, Madison. February 10, 8:30-3. Keynote speakers: Elizabeth Henderson on CSAs and Lynda Simpkins on Community Farms. Fee of \$30 for CT NOFA members or \$40 for non-members; includes lunch and handouts.

Cultivating Organic Connecticut

Conference, Windsor High School, Windsor. March 10, 8:30-4:45. John and Nancy Jack Todd will speak on "The Promise of Ecological Design." Over 30 workshops, market, pot lunch. Visit www.ctnofa.org in January for more information.



Sitting under the mistletoe
(Pale green, fairy mistletoe)
One last candle burning low,
All the sleepy dancers gone,
Just one candle burning on.
Shadows lurking everywhere:
Someone came and kissed me there.

- Walter De la Mare



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Please contact any of the above CHAI members with your questions, concerns, ideas & inspirations!

Please contact Gale (cadpine@yahoo.com) if you have any changes in address or email address!



FOODS FOR WINTER HEALTH:

Proper nutrition is a key to staying healthy throughout the winter. Luckily nature provides all the necessary vitamins and minerals needed for a healthy immune and respiratory system for winter health. Organically locally grown is the best, but since little is produced in Vermont in the winter, these foods are still highly recommended.

- winter squashes - high in vitamin A, C, D
- rosehips - vitamins A, C, bioflavonoids
- root crops (carrots, beets, turnips, potatoes) - vitamins A, C trace minerals, iron
- green and red peppers - vitamins A, C, bioflavonoids
- Brassica family - (broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, mustard greens) - vitamins A, C trace minerals, iron, calcium
- seaweeds - protein, minerals, trace minerals
- pomegranates and persimmons - vitamin A, C
- lemons/citrus fruits - vitamin C, bioflavonoids

http://www.purpleshutter.com/herbarium_winter.php