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Looking Back at Thanksgiving in the Shire 2023

By Katharine Of Caithness



It's November and the holiday season is fast approaching, SCA activity has slowed down for the winter. Thoughts turn to Kingdom and Shire 12th Night Celebrations and to our annual Shire Thanksgiving Dinner,

I do remember how exactly it all came about but when we were a much smaller shire it was discussed why don't we have a potluck Thanksgiving. Little did anyone know that it would become a Shire tradition . One thing led to another and before anyone knew it we were having them every year at various Shire members houses. We got so big that the only house to accommodate all of us was Kallistia's and Drea's which we soon grew out of. Next we moved to various other locations until last year we ended up at church outside Martinsburg. Since last year we have gained new members and lost members, but

what always remains in the Shire are the memories and the Shire traditions. Garb is optional and all you need to bring is a dish to share and yourself.

Thanksgiving in the Middle Ages?

By Katharine Of Caithness

While many of us think of Thanksgiving as an uniquely American holiday it has been celebrated in one form or another since ancient times. In 1621 with the Pilgrims at Plymouth the Greeks praised Demeter for an excellent harvest. Thanksgiving / harvest festivals have been around for a very long time.

The Middle Ages was not any different. Life revolved around the church which had a Liturgical Calendar. Practically every town had their own patron saint whose feast day might fall on or about the same time as harvest time. The old adage of killing two birds with one stone was put to use. Since the Europeans were no longer pagans and no longer worshiped pagan gods to grant them a good harvest and never passing up a chance for a good time , they switched to Saints Days around harvest time. Thus celebrating the Saints day and being thankful celebrating the harvest at the same time.

So this year as we gather for are annual Thanksgiving Potluck feast and you think this has nothing to do with the SCA whatsoever, Think Again.