

## Newcomers to Æthelmarc

Having created a newsletter focusing on artisans of the kingdom, we wanted to highlight some people who recently moved into the area. We will continue to do so in a later issue as well.

### Caera Fitzpatrick

*Tell us about yourself:*

I'm Caera Fitzpatrick, originally from the East Kingdom. I chose an Irish persona and the last name of Fitzpatrick from my family tree—the timeline is less tacked down. I've pulled towards 600–800 AD, 1100s AD, and am now geeking out about the late Bronze age, so about 800 BC.



My first event was Pennsic 39 (2010) and I had already been seriously knitting for about 10 years and mostly spindle-spinning for about 4. I was very lucky in that I came in knowing a few friends who knew people and that became a massive friend base for me. I never really got the chance to have Peer Fear because I was surrounded by them right at the start. I moved to Æthelmarc in late 2021, but have not made it to many in-person events for a variety of reasons. However, I have truly appreciated the virtual side of things because it gives me a way to participate in some small way. I've found warm welcomes in every corner and have been very glad to give back through teaching fiber arts and making Baronial scrolls. I still very much feel like I'm learning my way around the Kingdom.

A bullet-point list of what I was up to while in the East (event staffing, A&S projects, awards, etc.) can be found on my East Kingdom wiki page. I should mention there is a minor spelling confusion out there because I had been spelling my first name Caera but it had to be spelled Ceara to register it. ([https://wiki.eastkingdom.org/wiki/Caera\\_Fitzpatrick](https://wiki.eastkingdom.org/wiki/Caera_Fitzpatrick))

## *Tell us about your Arts and Sciences Focus*

I am a textile geek, generally focused on spinning and the fiber content itself. Of course, all the skills \*using\* thread and yarn are like my personal Pokemon—gotta catch ‘em all! For something completely different, I also dabble in calligraphy and illumination.

Through a vast stroke of luck, I met Magistra Agatha Iris (mka Rachel Case) at just the right time that I was able to collaborate on the Lengberg bra & headcovering reconstructions. Including experiments, I spun flax exclusively for a full year and the linen thread used for her headcovering and the sewing thread on the undergarment is my handiwork. My spinning was entirely based on a couple of close-up pictures she sent me of extant threads. When I finally got to see them in person and looked at my threads next to them...well, I became completely overwhelmed and was a speechless, teary mess for a few minutes.

My current geekery is the Must Farm dig site (MustFarm.com). Go, geek out. It’s a Bronze Age site in the eastern fens of England that was abandoned quickly and dropped straight into the river channel beneath it. The finds have been breathtaking and some are completely unique to Europe. Food-in-bowls type of preservation, to the point it’s been suggested as Britain's Pompeii. The matrix preserved plant fibers (so, not good for protein fibers like wool) and the flax threads they found are incredibly fine. They’ve also taken the opportunity to do a deep dive into the environmental surroundings at the time. The Cambridge Archaeological Unit was incredibly generous with their public outreach from the start in 2015/16, so there were tantalizing tidbits available well before the initial publications were released (Free! Online!) in late March of 2024. My brain snagged onto a twined fabric (something between macrame and weaving) made of lime bast-tree fiber. New textile things fascinate me and I had only recently heard of making fiber from trees. Twining is also new to me, and the sample that they found was so small that they don’t know what it was part of. I’m that type of crazy that immediately decided to hunt down a tree (it doesn’t grow limes, by the way—learned that), figured out how to get fiber off it, and now I’m at the point I have to figure out how to twine and to make it look like the fragment they found. I’m really curious to play with it and explore what it might have been. A hat? A bag? A mat? A coat of sorts? Maybe even a cup—who knows? Probably not a cup.







**Layers!**

## *What are your future plans?*

In short: keep learning, keep making, and keep teaching. I would like to relearn nålbinding, keep upping my scribal game, and anything with yarn. As for teaching, I take requests if anyone has a class they'd like to take. My "day job" is teaching and I really love it.

Projects: The twined fabric is a work in progress, so my future plans include finishing a sample and maybe experimenting with options. I'll probably be lopping off another branch in a few weeks to try another way of harvesting the lime bast from the beginning and seeing what a difference that makes.

I've also been mentally compiling a list of things that have historically been used for yarn that are not the more commonly known ones. I got the idea from one of the lovely people that joined in for the online A&S gathering when I talked about the twined fabric, but I'm sorry to say I don't remember precisely who it was. I'm also sorting out how it would work as a class or if it could/would need to be a series of classes.



**Dried Harvest**



## THL Zoya Dragomirova,

Mundanely, Kathy Burden



*Block stamp Rus garb from 10<sup>th</sup> Century*

### ***Tell us about yourself:***

My persona is Rus, leaving room for representation across times and regions.

I participated in both Brendoken and Flaming Gryphon Baronies for over 14 years. Moving to Blairsville, St. Swithin's Bog, was moving home for me. Since coming here in November 2023, I have participated in the Æthelmearc Kingdom Arts and Sciences Championship, St. Swithin's Bog Arts and Sciences Competition, Gulf Wars, and the Passing of the Ice Dragon.

While at Blackstone Raid I participated in the first ever Project Promenade hosted by the Clothier's Guild! For this 22-hour team sewing competition, I teamed up with Agnell a Lacopi (Michelle Dempsey), Magdalena Txoperena (Drea Choperna), Anastasie DeLamoure (Samantha

Moore), Arne Burdenson (Dan Burden), and Salvatore De la Torres (Adam Wilson) as “Team Stranger Things” and WON! Shout out to my Stranger Things team members!

FUN FACT: My first two SCA events were Pennsic.

### *Tell us about your Arts and Sciences Focus*

Projects have been Rus headwear constructed from silk, copper, brass, pearls, and birch bark, including chasing and repousse with brass. Ilana Stepanova is my go-to for research on medieval Novograd. Her book *The Burial Dress of the Rus' in the Upper Volga Region (Late 10<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> Centuries)* fostered my love for the Rus people their origins and culture.

I have a weakness for rabbit holes that includes research on headwear. Headwear can reveal many levels of information about a society; what they value, trade, skill levels, cultural patterns. etc. Headwear reveals a story over time; I find it quite amazing.

### *What are your future plans?*

Looking forward, I am working on a second version of the headwear from Burka grave BJ 581. This grave was famously mistakenly assigned as a male warrior but through further testing was discovered to be female. The headwear includes four intricate wire weave plumes, and a metal top is Rus in characteristics.

Several classes are planned for Pennsic on Rus Headwear, our Promenade Team, and Burka Bj 581.

My husband Arne and I are meeting new people and enjoying our new Kingdom. Thank you for the warm welcome. To all of you, we say Vivat!

## Looking for more Artisans?

We're keeping to two artisans per issue at the moment, although that might change. And there will be themes! We're hoping to have another issue of another issue of newly minted Æthelmearc subjects, and then a focus on Japanese Arts next, followed by Royals in the Arts! I can be reached at [ans@aethelmearc.org](mailto:ans@aethelmearc.org) for more suggestions and I look forward to highlighting subjects throughout my service as Arts and Sciences Minister.

Rue