



URSA MINOR

The quarterly newsletter of the Barony of Small Gray Bear
Spring 2015

Greetings Good Gentles!

This will be my last newsletter as Chronicler for Small Gray Bear. I'd just like to say how much I appreciate everyone who has contributed to the newsletter over my term in office. The purpose of group newsletters is to entertain, inform, and educate the populace. To all who have helped in that endeavor, my deepest thanks, most especially my husband, Brendan, who typeset the newsletter and made it look spiffy.

Floki kraka Gunnarson will be assuming the office of Chronicler by September. He has some exciting ideas, and I know he'll do an outstanding job.

In service,

THL Medb ingean Daire

Through My Eyes:

If you ask fifty members what the SCA is to them you are likely as not to get as many answers. To one it may be the fighting, another is attracted by the arts and sciences, while others still are more than pleased to serve. Truth be told though the SCA is far more than that. It is a medicine we take to ease the symptoms our mundane existence brings on. If you seem to be lost in regards to where I am going with this ask yourself how many Tuesday mornings you have crawled out of bed to get ready for the day and the one thing center stage in your thoughts is you only have three more days until you load your garb and gear in the car, you leave the mundane world behind and for a weekend the modern era no longer exists.

I remember a conversation I had very early on in my SCA career where I stated that if the SCA ceased to be fun I could simply walk away and short the small investment at the time of my membership I really was not out anything. I did not want to walk away then, nor do I now I love the SCA. I love what it is, and love what I dream it can be even more. I look at the people I respect in the kingdom and I often wonder if they still see the game through the fresh eyes they once did? Can the man who has sat the throne on multiple occasions comprehend the wonder of the newbie? Can the



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peers who have fresh faces come to them begging to be taken underwing appreciate how intimidating they are to the newcomer?

Do you ever wonder old timer in the game how much you may mean to the game of that new comer trying to find his path? It isn't even always help at fighter practice or an A&S day, sometimes it is something as simple as taking a few minutes and talking to that new person. Is it just me? Or shouldn't everyone within this great game of ours have that person or persons that inspire them, make them aim just that much higher? What you've perhaps had decades to accomplish the newcomer cannot grasp. Teach them! The SCA is not some zero sum game. One person's success is not at another's expense. Does it not make sense that if all are succeeding the game succeeds? I mean what is left when the old timers fade away into history if the newcomer is not advanced?

Do you want a better game? Take someone new to newish that maybe hasn't found their course and sit and talk with them. Find things out and make suggestions, even introductions. Sure some will come and go, it is the nature of the beast. But I guarantee you will have more fall behind if they feel discouraged and left behind. You may have a different outlook, that's fine I am simply putting out there an option from where I sit.

Floki kraka Gunnarson

Basic Applique Technique

By Medb ingean Daire (April Carter)

Applique is the technique of cutting shapes out of one fabric and sew them onto another. This can be a useful technique for applying decoration to a delicate fabric. Embroidery can be done on a sturdy fabric, such as linen, and stitched onto a more delicate silk garment. In [The Craftsman's Handbook](#), Cennini's advice to craftsmen who are commissioned to work embroidery on velvet was to do the embroidery on thinner fabric and attach it to the velvet. Applique can also be used with non-embellished fabric to create large designs. In period, applique was used for banners, cushions, and to apply embroidery to other fabrics.

General Considerations:

How are you going to use this piece? Is it likely to see a lot of dirt or hard wear? How much time and trouble are you willing to go to in cleaning it? How important is it to you to be period correct? If a piece is likely to need frequent cleaning, or see a lot of hard use, select materials that are easy to care for. Modern stabilizers, like fusible interfacing, can give extra security, but are not period. They also add a certain amount of weight and stiffness that may or may not be desired.



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Choosing materials:

If your piece is going to see a lot of hard wear, or needs to be easy to clean, make sure that the fiber content of the fabrics is the same. This will reduce the risk of damage caused by the fabrics shrinking at different rates. Be aware that choosing a bulky fabric may make it difficult to turn raw edges under. Well-fulled wool, however, can be easily sewn down with a buttonhole or blanket stitch, and the edge won't ravel. If you are making your piece out of cotton, I highly recommend Kona cotton.

Preparing fabric:

PRE-WASH YOUR FABRIC!

Basic Technique:

1. Make a template out of paper, cardstock, etc., in the shape you want to appliqué.
2. Pin the template to the fabric and trace around it.

If you are using a non-raveling fabric, fusible interfacing, a very heavy fabric, or are covering the edge in some way:

3. Cut the appliqué out on the line.
4. Pin the appliqué to the background fabric. I like the curved safety pins made for quilting. The curved pin distorts the fabric less, and I don't have to worry about scratching myself on the exposed pin while I'm working.
5. Stitch down. You can cover the edge with an embroidery stitch, like buttonhole stitch, or you can lay a cord over the edge, and couch the cord down (there are several period pieces made using this technique).

If you are using fusible interfacing, fuse the interfacing to the fabric the applique is being cut from, then cut out the applique pieces. Peel the paper off the back, then iron them onto the background fabric. Fusible interfacing will "glue" everything together, but it's not intended as a substitute for sewing on an item that will see hard wear and frequent washing, so you'll still need to sew the pieces down.

Interfacing can be difficult to sew through, but it does lend stability to delicate fabrics and eliminates the need for pinning. Embroidery or couching right along the edge will make the piece look more finished, hold the applique pieces in place, and protect the edges from raveling.

If you are using a light-weight fabric:

1. Cut the appliqué out with a seam allowance.
2. Fold the seam allowance down over the template. Sew basting stitches through the paper template to stitch the seam allowance down.
3. Clip inside curves. On outside curves, pleat the excess or cut notches to make it lie flat.
4. Once the basting is done, iron the appliqué, then remove the basting stitches and the paper template. The seam allowance should stay turned under. Put a little liquid stitch on clipped curves, if you want.
5. Pin the appliqué to the background fabric and stitch it down, using either small hem stitches, embroidery stitches, or couched cord.

This technique can also be used to attach embroidery to a garment. I have found that I usually do not need the paper template, I just cut out the embroidery, leaving a seam allowance, then baste a hem all



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the way around the piece. I usually leave the basting stitches in place until after I've sewn the applique down, then I remove the basting stitches carefully.

