

Western South Carolina



American Institute  
of Chemical Engineers

Mead-making tour at Wandering Bard Meadery



accompanied by a gift card for Craft Axe  
throwing at Hampton Station in Greenville, SC.  
May 12, 2022

## A Brief (very brief) Look into Axes

The axe is one of the oldest tools used by mankind. The oldest axes were stone hand axes. Evidence of stone axes predates written history and we must make educated guesses on which ones were developed for hunting, warfare or as merely as cutting tools.

During the Bronze Age (2000 BC – 500 AD for Northern Europe), stone axes began giving way to axes with a head made of copper and bronze. The metallurgy and process for making of axes has changed significantly over time and the actual composition (hardness, weight, etc) are specific to application. The weight and balance are another key determinant in the utility of an axe, whether for hunting or as a weapon. The former relates to the chemical engineers area of expertise and the latter to that of the mechanical engineer. We encourage you to peruse the various websites to out there to gain a better understanding of the “sport” you are engaging in when throwing axes.

Excavations of Central European graves from the period 500–750 AD uncovered a special axe that has been named the Franziska. This axe was initially used by the Franks, before spreading to the Teutons, Burgundians, Lombards and finally the Goths. The Franziska has an unusual shape and was clearly designed to be an effective throwing tool. When correctly thrown, a Franziska rotates a number of times in the air before the axe blade hits its target. The axe will rotate once at a distance of 4–5 meters from the target, twice at a distance of 8–9 meters and three times at a distance of 12–13 meters.

## Tomahawks

The tomahawk was the creation of the Algonquian Indians in Native America. The term is derived from the



Algonquian words “tamahak” or “tamahakan,” which means a tool for cutting. The original tomahawks were not the sleek metal beauties you see these days. Rather, they were stone heads attached to wooden handles

and secured by rawhide. The Europeans introduced the metal blade to the Native Indians about four centuries ago and the local tribes quickly embraced it. Today, tomahawks are crafted by companies in America and can also be found in Europe. Native Indian blacksmiths still exist who are experts in making this tool. While its material has changed over the centuries, the tomahawk remains a versatile weapon which is handy in camping and more convenient than hatchets due to its light weight. Modern tomahawks are made of special alloy steel, the blade and the spike are tougher and shock resistant. It is a more universal tool these days and used in games like throwing competitions.

[We hope you enjoy your mead tour and gift card!](#)

[Thank-you for attending! WSC AIChE May 12, 2022](#)

## Axe Throwing and Mead Making Tour

hosted by the

Western South Carolina section  
of the American Institute of Chemical  
Engineers

Information in this brochure taken from a  
variety of websites including:

<https://www.gransforsbruk.com/en/axe-knowledge/the-history-of-the-axe/>

<https://www.atlantacutlery.com/the-tomahawk-history-and-evolution>

For questions about this event and future  
events please go to our website

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